

THE CHURCH

THE PILLAR AND GROUND
OF THE TRUTH



JOHN FRANKLIN BURNETT



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The church, the pillar and
ground of the truth



THE CHURCH
THE PILLAR AND GROUND
OF THE TRUTH

✓
BY JOHN FRANKLIN BURNETT

AUTHOR OF

"CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR ADDRESSES," "ORIGIN AND
PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIANS," ETC.



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TO THE MEMORY OF THE CHRISTIAN
PREACHERS WHO LIVED AND LABORED IN
THE LONG AGO, AND TO THEIR SUCCESSORS
IN SERVICE FOR ALL TIME TO COME THIS
LITTLE VOLUME IS SINCERELY DEDICATED.

THE AUTHOR.

SOME FOREWORDS

ONE—The writing of a book is serious business. If error should be taught the readers are wrongly affected, and must suffer harm. On the other hand, if truth is taught the author speaks to many and influences many for good, who otherwise would never come under his influence.

TWO—It was not the author's purpose in the beginning to write a book. Indeed, such a thing did not occur to him until the matter had all been written one or more times. Originally he studied and wrote, as he had opportunity, for the sake of discovering Biblical teaching concerning the Church, and when he had thus studied and written, it occurred to him to offer to others the benefit of what he had discovered.

THREE—The entire work has been done at such times as could be spared from the regular duties and strenuous obligations of the author's life, which made extensive research an impossibil-

ity, and necessarily limited adequate thought and literary preparedness, and yet the author feels assured that in the work he offers, there will be found sufficient evidence to justify his conclusions.

FOUR—The author does not flatter himself that the book is meeting a long felt want, but he does feel that all too little is known about the Church that Jesus Christ is building upon the Rock, and hence with the hope and desire that this little volume may stimulate a study of, and a love for that Church, he ventures to send it forth upon its mission, even though it may not possess literary excellence, nor the polish of a scholarly production.

FIVE—The book contains and expresses the author's individual conviction of the subjects he treats. It is not authorized by the Church, nor endorsed by an organization. The Christian Church, as such, does not pronounce upon any Biblical subject, and while the author most sincerely believes all he has written, he would vote against an official endorsement of it by the Church to which he belongs.

SIX—This book belongs to, and is issued by, The Christian Publishing Association, and that too without profit, compensation, or obligation to the author, but The Christian Publishing Association does not assume responsibility for the doctrinal utterances, being controlled by a brotherhood that allows individual interpretation of the Scriptures, making Christian character the only test of fellowship. With our people, freedom of utterance is equally a right with freedom of interpretation; the one implying the other.

SEVEN—The author desires to acknowledge his obligation to the printers who set the type, to the proof-reader who corrected the errors, to the Manager who gave the manuscript personal attention, to the men who made up the forms, and to the superintendent, foremen, and workers of the composing and press rooms, for their kindly, patient service, by which the book possesses value it would not otherwise have had.

EIGHT—The author acknowledges special obligation to Rev. Samuel Quinn Helfenstein, D. D., who verified the Greek phrases and references, and to Mrs. Lulu Craig Helfenstein, for

careful attention given to the literary character of the manuscript.

NINE—It is a very special pleasure to have the Introductory by Rev. Pressley E. Zartmann, and the author feels highly complimented in having his little book contain such valuable matter from the pen of a fellow servant whose brotherly fellowship has been a blessing and an inspiration for almost a quarter of a century.

JOHN FRANKLIN BURNETT.

Dayton, Ohio, April 16, 1917.

The sixty-sixth anniversary of his birth.

INTRODUCTORY

With no intention to overdo the privilege here accorded me, it is with the utmost sincerity that the reader's attention is called to the contents of this volume. The author, in his own clear and distinct way, sets forth the Church—its place, its function, its force as a leader. Then he goes about to call attention to the duties and privileges of its various officers. In it all, no attempt has been made to assume the attitude of "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," but specially calling the reader to heed "former things," with the Scriptural basis for the position taken.

The close reader will at once be convinced of the absolutely Biblical setting of the Church and its auxiliaries. The book does not set forth the position of any denomination. It is not a rule of doctrine and practice for the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, or any of the many other branches of the Church, but outlines in distinct simplicity the meaning of the Church of our Lord

and Savior, Jesus Christ, the members of which are Christ-ians. Deep-rooted and comprehensive, it is clear-cut and Biblical. Speaking with definiteness, the author cites Scriptural proof for the position taken in things doctrinal and governmental, with, however, emphatic notation that individual interpretation is the Biblical privilege of every follower of the Man of Galilee, and that the divinity of Christ is above the goodness of man.

In the closing pages, large place is given to "The Preacher," his call, commission, qualifications, preparation, his message, and his place of service among and for the people. In the setting of these assets of the preacher-man one discerns the close student and the preparedness which he finds by close fellowship with the author—a blessed privilege it has been mine to enjoy for many years.

This is a volume that should find its place in every church library, as well as being one of the most read books in every family of every church.

With his many years of close attention to, and active service in, the cause of the Master, my friend, the author, gives to our people a timely volume.

PRESSLEY ELMER ZARTMANN.

THE CHURCH

The idealized Church—the spiritual body of Christ—the Church that Jesus is to “present to Himself not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing,” is never conceived nor spoken of as a tangible entity: a Church that can meet and choose a pastor, transact business, make contracts, elect officers, appoint committees, and conduct service. All such things as these must be done by the local congregation.

THE CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED BY CHRIST

Perhaps it may be said, that in no correct sense did Christ organize a Church, but He established the Church, and that too while He was on the earth and among men. He began to build the Church during His public ministry. He said He would build His Church and He began the work of spiritual construction while in the flesh. The words, “I will build,” refer to the time in which He then lived and the work He was then doing as much as to the time and the work of the future. He began to build then, He is building yet, and He will continue to build until the Church is completed and He “presents it to Him-

self a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Christ had a following while on the earth, and that following was His Church. He spoke of having other sheep which were not of that flock, and He declared His intention of bringing them in, so that there would be but one flock, and one shepherd.

He was not speaking of a flock which He was going to get after Pentecost, but of one He already had. His followers were believers in Him while He was among them, and they cannot be more now. They communed together, they were united to Him by faith, they had left all to follow Him, and they lacked nothing, absolutely nothing to make them the *ecclesia*—the called out, or assembled ones. Jesus told them not to fear, for it was His Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom. He went so far as to give them instruction as to the treatment of an offending brother (Matt. 16:17, 18) without even suggesting that the Church to which they were to tell it at the last was not then in existence. It is said that on the day of Pentecost, "there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Added unto whom, and to what? Could the Lord add to something that had no existence? That to which they were added was the Church that already existed. It had not yet met for worship; it had not yet

selected a bishop; it had not yet chosen deacons, but it existed; *it was*. To that Church belonged Peter, and James, and John, and all the other apostles who had been faithful to Jesus Christ; it included Mary, His own dear mother, and the Mary out of whom He had cast the devils, and the woman whom the Pharisees had brought to Him for judgment; it included the man who had been born blind, but who could then see, and many others, all of whom He had taken into His fellowship and who had entered His Church while He was on the earth and among them in the flesh. That is the church which Jesus began to build, and which He will complete, and, "then present it to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Paul in speaking of that Church says: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is therefore not of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where were

the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now they are many members, but one body." 1 Cor. 12: 12-20. This is not a divided Church, but a Church with one Head, or Lord, one Spirit, one Faith, one Baptism, one Hope, and one God and Father of us all. The late Rev. Austin Craig, D. D., commenting upon this one body of Christ says: "The mystic body of Christ has one Head. It is not a deformed monster; it has not many heads; it has but one Head,—Jesus Christ. Queen Victoria is not the head of Christ's Church, although she is the head of the Church of England. Pope Pius IX. is not the head of Christ's Church, although he is the head of the Church of Rome. Christ is the Head of His own Church."

As in the Church of Christ there is one Head, so there is but one Body. Christ has not several bodies. He has not a Catholic body and a Protestant body. He has not a Calvinistic body and an Arminian body. He has not a Presbyterian body and a Methodist body, no! Christ has but one Body; "many members, yet but one Body." And this one Body, this one Church, contains all the members, all the followers of Christ. There-

fore no Church is the Church of Christ, which does not contain all the members of Christ's spiritual body. The Church of Rome is not the Church of Christ, unless the Church of Rome contains all the good. The Church of England is not the Church of Christ, because she excludes some who are members of Christ. The Methodist Church is not the Church of Christ, for the reason that it does not contain all Christians. Nor is the Presbyterian Church, nor the Baptist Church, nor the Lutheran Church, the Church of Christ. No one of these churches is that One Body of Christ, for the sufficient reason that no one of them contains all the members of Christ's Mystic Body.

The Church Is a Divine Institution.

It is not an organization, but a divine institution. The interpretation that Daniel gives to the vision of the king bears testimony to the above statement. He told the king that he saw a great image with a head of gold, and breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron and feet partly iron, and partly clay, and that he saw a little stone cut from the mountain without hands, and it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

That little stone cut from the mountainside, without human hands, is the symbol of the Church

of Jesus Christ, and it is absolutely without human element, so far as its origin or power to accomplish its mission is concerned. The power within the Church, put there by the divine life, is that which makes it effective, and will enable it to fill the whole world as set forth in the vision of the king and the prophet's interpretation.

The Church Has a Divine Builder.

When Jesus Christ came into the coasts of Cæsarea Phillippi, He held a conversation with His disciples in regard to the opinion that men entertained concerning Himself, and also as to their own conception of Him, and when Peter confessed that He was the Christ, Jesus told him plainly that upon the Rock Christ Jesus He would build His Church, and that the gates of Hades should not prevail against it. The word "build" as Jesus used it, does not mean to build to completion, as one completes the reading of a book, or the building of a ship, but rather, I will be building. It shall be my life's work to build my Church. I shall build here, and there, and everywhere; I shall build in this age, and through the ages to come; I shall build here in Judea, and in Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the earth, to-day, to-morrow, this year, next year, on and forever, until I shall complete the building and

present it to myself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Jesus has been doing that work since then until now. Amid the persecutions that befell the early Christians, in the flames that burned the martyrs, in the prisons that enclosed the saints, in the field, in the shop, in the home, on the street, everywhere, Jesus has been preparing and fitting material into this spiritual brotherhood, this mystic body of His, which He Himself called the Church, and which He Himself is building.

I have often heard preachers say that they went out and built up the Church. As well might the hammer say, I built the house; as well might the saw say, I shaped the board; as well might the pen say, I wrote the letter. It is the hammer in the hand of the carpenter, the saw in the hand of the workman, the pen in the hand of the writer, and the preacher in the hand of the great Master builder, who, by His own power and the proper use of the means employed, is building this divine structure called the Church, the mystic body of the Son of God.

The Church Has a Divine Foundation.

I can quite understand how human wisdom and human power might be sufficient for the laying of a foundation broad enough and solid enough for

a human organization, but I am unable to conceive of human wisdom and human power sufficiently great to lay the foundation for an institution that is to last throughout all time and eternity, and be found in every country of the world; in every age of the world, since the dawn of Christianity. I am quite convinced also that God has not left the laying of this foundation to any human wisdom or power, for He says: "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not be in haste." Paul in speaking of the foundation says: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The Church is not built upon the teaching of men; not upon a foundation of human construction, but upon the foundation planned in the counsels of heaven and laid by the power of the Omnipotent.

The Church Has a Divine Law.

As with the foundation, I can see how the wisdom and power of men might be sufficient to enact a law for the government of even a world-wide organization, but I cannot understand how human wisdom and human power could be sufficient to enact a law for the government of an institution that is to embrace every nation under heaven, live

under all the varied forms of human society, through all generations of men, and yet be so written as to fit into all lives, all conditions, and all governments of all time, and of all nations. I am quite convinced too, that God has not left it to the intelligence of man to enact such a law. The Bible is God's divine law for the government of His Church, and in it is found a remedy for all evils, a cure for all diseases, a rule for all conduct, a guide for every life, a penalty for every sin, a reward for every good deed, and a promise for every kindly service. There is not now, there never has been, a condition of human society for which there is not a principle and a rule in God's written law for its reward, condemnation, or relief, as the condition demands. The Church has a divine law, as well as a divine foundation.

The Church Has a Divine Membership.

By this we are to understand that the members have passed from death unto life, having been made partakers of the divine nature. It is not an uncommon thing to hear one ask another: "How many members have you in your church?" meaning, of course, how many Christians are there in your membership, and at once the answer is given from the human roll, as though that constituted the divine family of God among men; as though a

human could count for God, as though a man could look down into a human heart and weigh and determine motive, and love, and loyalty, and thereby decide who are worthy of the kingdom of God. Elijah undertook that job and made a miserable failure. He said, Lord, I have counted them, and I am the only one left, and they seek my life. God said, Elijah, you have missed a few. You haven't counted all the faithful, for I know of seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Whenever one begins to count the good in the community, one is sure to develop that sort of cynical, querulous spirit that concludes the good are all dead but the one who counts. The story is told of a pioneer preacher who asked a man at his cabin door one evening if there were any Christians in that neighborhood, and the man in the cabin said, "Well, there are only two, myself and brother Jake, and I have my doubts about Jake." The Jews had counted them in Christ's time, and thought they had counted them correctly. Jesus said, you have missed a few. "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd." I think Jesus must have said, I have them on every hillside, in every valley, on every mountain top, on every plain, in Rome, in Samaria,

in the fields, in the shop, in the home, in the store; anywhere, everywhere, where the heart is loyal to me, and my spirit has entered into the life, there you will find those who are being prepared for a place in my body on the earth, and my kingdom in heaven. But whether there be many, or few, they are members by virtue of their having partaken of the divine nature, and in that sense they constitute a divine membership. Bear in mind that this is not a description of the membership of the local organization. There may be many names enrolled on the book of the local organization that will not be found in the Lamb's Book of Life, and certain it is that many names will be found written by the recording angel that were never enrolled in the membership of any local Church. Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you." You are my sheep, and it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

The Church Has a Divine Name.

If Jesus Christ is divine, His name is divine also, and the Church is to bear His name as a wife bears the name of her husband. This name was promised long years before it was given to the followers of Christ. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not

rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name." Isaiah 62: 1, 2. The late Rev. J. J. Summerbell, D. D., than whom few, if any, among us were better able to speak, says:

What can be this "new name" that the Christ speaks of? May it not be that which sounds like Christ; that is, Christian? There was a "new name" (Acts 11: 26). As a matter of history we find that the disciples were called Christians; that it was a "new name" for them. May not that name be what Paul alludes to in Ephesians 3: 14, 15? According to the old version it reads: "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." If they are called "Christians" they are certainly named after Christ. The new version reads: "I bow my knees unto the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." Probably it ought to be, of whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named. That is what would be expected; that God, the Father, would name His whole family. From His affection for His only-begotten Son, it would not be surprising if God would name the whole family after Jesus Christ. That is just what he has done; for, as a matter of strict Biblical statement (Acts 11: 26), we find that the disciples "were called of God Christians." It is said that the argument for the divine appointment of the name rests mainly on the Greek word *chrematizo*. It will not be found a weak argument. The word occurs but in a limited number of passages. Let us examine all of them:

1. Matthew 2: 12: "And being warned (of God) in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way." "Warned of God" represents the original word *chrematizo*. The translators

(new translation) in this case have placed the words "of God" in italics, thereby saying to us all that they did not find them in the original; but the translators evidently thought the wise men had been warned "of God" in the dream, or they would not have inserted the words. It would require courage to say that the wise men did not have the same opinion. Matthew evidently considered that the actor in the word *chrematizo* was God, though God is not mentioned save by the word *chrematizo*. God *chrematized* the wise men not to return to Herod.

2. Matthew 2: 22: "But when he (Joseph) heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned (of God) in a dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee." In this case, also, "warned of God" represents the Greek word *chrematizo*. As in the former case, the words "of God" are in italics. The translators are right in their opinion that it was God that *chrematized* Joseph. Who gave him the dream, if not God, according to the tenor of the story? And yet God's action is not declared in any one word, save by the word *chrematizo*.

3. Luke 2: 26: "And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." The words "had been revealed" here represent *chrematizo*. God's action is here distinctly stated otherwise than by the word *chrematizo*; for the words "Holy Spirit" are in the original as well as English. Hence God *chrematized* Simeon.

In these three cases we have no other actor or agent bound up in the word *chrematizo* but God.

4. Acts 10: 22: "And they said, Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man, and one that feareth God, and well reported of by all the nation of the Jews, was warned (of God) by a holy angel to send for thee into his house." The words "warned of God" represent the Greek word *chrematizo*. As in the first two cases, the translators have placed the words "of God" in italics, as not being in the original; but the English and the Greek both mention a holy angel as the one that *chrematized* Cornelius; but being a holy angel, Cornelius being a holy man, the trans-

lators thought that God was the real actor, and the angel only the messenger, as the word means. Hence the *chrematizing* is by God.

In these four cases God is the *chrematizer*.

5. Romans 7: 1-3: "Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men who know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." "Shall be called" represents the Greek word *chrematizo*. The authority that *chrematized* in this case, it is evident, is the law; but the law is the law of God, as the messenger in the last case was the messenger of God; as in the preceding case the dream was a dream from God. It is the law of God that called the woman an adulteress. It gave her the name, but it was only as the messenger of God. The law was God's law; hence it is God who really *chrematized* the woman.

6. Hebrews 8: 5: "Even as Moses is warned (of God) when he is about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount." In this case "is warned of God" represents the Greek word *chrematizo*. As before, the translators have put the words "of God" in italics. Their using the words "of God" shows that they believed that God was the one that warned Moses. Such was the fact. Read Exodus 25: 40: "And see that thou make them after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount." Exodus 25: 1: "And the Lord spake unto Moses." Thus it is positive that God was the person who warned Moses. God is the *chrematizer* as a matter of fact.

7. Hebrews 11: 7: "By faith Noah, being warned (of God) concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." In this case "warned of God" represents the Greek word *chrematizo*, and again the translators have put the words "of God" in italics. As before, they believed that it was a fact that Noah was warned of God. The translators were

right as to the fact. Read Genesis 6: 13: "And God said unto Noah, . . . Make thee an ark of gopher wood." Hence God is undoubtedly the one who warned Noah, and we arrive at the old conclusion that God was the *chrematizer*; God is the one that *chrematizes*.

8. Hebrews 12: 25: "For if they escaped not, when they refused him that warned them on earth, much more shall not we escape, who turn away from him that warneth from heaven." "Warned" represents the Greek word *chrematizo*. The person that warned was Moses. But the warnings of Moses derived their influence from the fact that he was recognized as the messenger of God. When Moses warned them not to touch the mountain, he did it all at the command of God. He was only another angel of God, earthly angel it is true, but still God's angel, and if the people refused him or disobeyed him, they escaped not, because it was really God's warning which they refused to obey. The escape was denied them because they refused God's messenger. Moses' law was the law of God. Its sanctions of death were imposed by God. His commands of prohibition were divine. Moses made all things after the pattern showed him in the mountain; not only in the form and arrangements of the tabernacle, but in the commandments, prohibitions, and penalties of the law, and the warning was thus God's warning; hence, in this case also, God is the *chrematizer*.

9. Romans 11: 4: "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal." The words "answer of God" represent the Greek word *chrematism*. The translators did not consider it necessary to put the words "of God" in italics; but the idea "of God" is no more contained in the word *chrematism* than in the word *chrematize*. *Chrematism* means answer of God, warning of God, calling of God, the speaking of God, undoubtedly. (1 Kings 19: 18.) If the divine agency rests in the noun, it certainly has a habitation in the verb also. It is really in both.

This is the word *chrematize* that is found in Acts 11: 26, and if God *chrematized* in the refer-

ences above given, we are forced to the conclusion that He *chrematized* the Disciples Christians, and so they were really named by divine authority. Joseph was a man whom God wanted to warn—to *chrematize*. He caused him to dream a dream in which he received the warning. Who warned Joseph to flee into Egypt? God. Here is a body of believers in Jesus Christ. To this body of believers God had promised a new name. And the disciples were called—*chrematized*—Christians, first in Antioch. Who *chrematized* them? God. Doctor Adam Clark, whose scholarship would not be questioned, says of Acts 11:26: “The original word here means to appoint, warn, or nominate.” Who has the right to appoint, or nominate, a name for the followers of Jesus Christ? He who promised the new name, and He alone. Albert Barns, whose technical scholarship has never been questioned, says on Acts 11:26: “The original word means to be divinely admonished, and it cannot be denied that the usual meaning in the New Testament is that of divine communication.” How strange it is that men of scholarship will say that the warning to Joseph, and the information to Simeon, and the instruction to Cornelius, came from God, but that the name Christian came from the enemies of God, and that too when the same word is used in each

case. If God's authority is found in one of the references given above, it is found in all of them, and we must conclude that the new name, the promised name, was given by divine authority to the disciples at Antioch. About the name given the disciples it may be said:

It Would Be a Name That Would Include All the Followers of Jesus Christ.

The name Christian is the only name that is all inclusive. There would be many believers who would hold immersion to be the only mode of baptism. The name must include them. There would be many who would believe in sprinkling as a mode of baptism. The name must include them. There would be many followers of Christ who would not believe in any mode of water baptism, and the name must include them also; and so with every other variety of intellectual conception of God and of duty.

The Name Would not Only Include All the Followers of Christ, but All the Elements of Christian Character as Well.

No human name does this, nor can any human name be found that will do it. When you speak the word Baptist you do not think so much of the elements of Christian character as you do of a

mode of baptism. What is true of that name is true of every other human name. Here is a man who never heard of America. I tell him of its history, its civilization, its character, and its genius, and inform him that I was born in America, and am a believer in the life and character of the American government. What would he call me? Most certainly he would call me an American. He would not call me a Mason, nor an Odd Fellow, nor a Democrat, nor a Republican, nor a Blacksmith, nor a Merchant—he would think of me, and speak of me, as an American. Here is a man who never heard of Christ. I tell him of the Christ, and of the Christianity He established. I tell him how Christ was God's gift to men, and how He sought a following from men, and how He appealed to men to believe in Him, and that I am a believer in Him, and a follower of His, that I have been born into His kingdom, am a partaker of His nature, and am His. What would He call me? If he knew, and spoke, the English language, he would call me a Christian. Most certainly he would not call me a Baptist, nor a Methodist, nor a Presbyterian, nor any other human name, but he would think of me, and speak of me as a Christian.

The Name Would Distinguish the Followers of Christ From the World, but not From Each Other.

Men are free to admit that the name Pharisee and the name Sadducee separated men from each other, but they are unwilling to admit that the human names, now given to bodies of believers, do the same thing. But they do. The name of Christ was the dividing name during His days on the earth, and it is the dividing name to-day. It is not the name that divides His followers into sects, but the name that divides His followers from the world, and just so far as it divides His followers from the world does it unite His followers in "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

It Would Be a Name That Would Include and Express the Believer's Union With Christ.

The name Nazarene would not do, for that would localize the believers, as the name American, or German, localizes the inhabitants of these countries. The name Disciple would not answer, for the reason that Plato and Gamaliel, and others, had disciples. The name Christian does include the believer's union with Christ, for it includes the whole name of Christ. The Christian is a partaker of the divine nature, and thus the union is assured.

The Name Would Most Certainly Honor Christ.

God was most careful to always honor His Son. On the occasion of His baptism, He said: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." On the occasion of the transfiguration He said: "This is my well beloved Son; hear ye Him." And Paul declared that he bowed the knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." Yes, God would honor His Son, and He has done it in naming His followers for Him.

Now when a number of Christians come together in church covenant and fellowship, they of necessity form a Church; that Church is a Christian Church, and any other name that may be given to it, except one that will localize and differentiate it as to location, is unwarranted as well as unbiblical.

The Church Has Two Divine Ordinances—Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Jesus Christ in commissioning His disciples to preach, also commissioned them to baptize. If the preaching is divinely authorized, so is the baptizing, and Paul, in speaking of the Lord's Supper very distinctly says: "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that

the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body." 1 Cor. 11: 23-29.

I think it should be said in this connection, that baptism is not to make one a Christian, but should be accepted because one is a Christian. Jesus Christ was as much the Son of God before He was baptized, as He was afterward. He was baptized not to make Him a Son, but because He was a Son; and believers should be baptized, not to make them Christians, but because they are Christians.

The Church Has a Divine Commission.

This divine commission is first to gather in, and then to send out. Jesus invited all people to come unto Him, and then He commissioned all people who came unto him to go out and tell the story of His love. First come, then go, is the divine order.

The Church Has the Divine Assurance of a Glorious Triumph.

The question so often asked by ministers, and by laymen, too, "What is the matter with the Church?" should never be asked again. There is absolutely nothing whatever the matter with the Church. Jesus Christ is building it, and it is just as proper to criticize the builder as it is to criticize his building. When we criticize the work, we criticize the workman. There may be many things wrong with men, and with organizations, but with the spiritual brotherhood, that mystic body of Jesus Christ, there can be nothing wrong, or else the divine Lord is at fault in the matter of His plans, and in the manner of His execution of them. Christ said He would build His Church and the gate of Hades should not prevail against it, and He will do all that He has said. He said to His disciples, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the king-

dom," and He will keep His word. The prophecy of the little stone cut from the mountainside, that filled the whole earth, is to be fulfilled, and the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.

From the rocky isle of Patmos, John saw the Church Triumphant; he heard the redeemed sing; he saw their white robes; he looked upon their crowns of glittering gold; he caught glimpses of their heavenly beauty; he beheld them as they encircled the great white throne, singing the song of the redeemed; and he said, "*Innumerable! no man can number them.*" It was the Church that Jesus Christ had built upon the Rock of Ages, and was presenting to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

That is the Church into which I was born by repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The angel recorded my name in the Lamb's Book of Life, and then I united with a local congregation, where my name is recorded, and with which I co-operate in the activities of the people of God.

THE LOCAL CHURCH

The fact and the identity of the local Church are recognized and spoken of throughout the

entire New Testament scriptures. There was a Church at Jerusalem, and one at Antioch, one at Cenchreæ, one at Corinth, one at Ephesus, one at Smyrna, one at Pergamos, one at Thyatira, one at Sardis, one at Philadelphia, one at Laodicea; and others are mentioned as having their existence and holding their worship in private houses. (1 Cor. 16: 19.)

All the warnings, rebukes, counsels, and encouragements of the New Testament scriptures are addressed to the churches as independent units, each, as such, being responsible to God.

These local Churches may unite, federate, and combine until they become world-wide, but they can never lose their individual and independent identity and character.

THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM THE MODEL

There was a time when the whole Church—the only Church—that had a visible existence was at Jerusalem, and it may be concluded that it would be made the model Church in all the essential fundamentals of Church life.

Some of the apostles were present during their entire lifetime, so that when any matter came up for consideration, or for apostolic definition, they were there to render judgment and to give assistance, thus making the Church at Jerusalem model

and effective in all its relations to the Kingdom of God.

The Following Things are Mentioned of That First Church.

1. The members continued steadfast in the apostles' teaching and doctrine.

2. The members continued steadfast in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayer.

3. The members chose a competent number of deacons, two of whom became evangelists.

4. The members recognized the presence and authority of the apostles.

5. The members so far as known chose their own bishop, or pastor.

6. The members were thoughtful of the claims of each other.

7. The members consecrated their possessions along with the consecration of themselves.

8. The whole Church was evangelistic in character, in tone, and in conduct.

The Rights and Duties of the Church at Jerusalem Are the Rights and Duties of the Local Church Anywhere.

We may conclude with absolute certainty that the Church at Jerusalem continued steadfast in the apostles' teaching, and doctrine, and fellow-

ship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayer as a matter of duty, and that as a matter of duty it selected and ordained the seven deacons, and as a matter of duty it recognized the presence and authority of the apostles. The same is true of all else that it did; and we may conclude with unquestioned assurance that what was the right and duty of the Church at Jerusalem, is the right and duty of the Church anywhere. All that inhered in the Church at Jerusalem inheres in the local Church anywhere. What the Church at Jerusalem did the Church at Corinth, and the Church at Antioch, and the Church at Thyatira, and the Church at Pergamos, and the Church at Sardis, and the Church at Philadelphia, and the Church at any other place had a right to do. Now it is equally certain that what was true of the Church at Jerusalem in this respect was true of the Church at Antioch, and Corinth, and all the others, and it is true of all the local churches to-day. The Church at Antioch may have been very much like the Church at Jerusalem, but in no sense was it subservient to it, nor did the Church at Jerusalem ever try to exercise any authority over it or over any other Church of that time. All the churches organized by the apostles were distinct, independent bodies. Each Church managed its

own affairs, absolutely independent of every other Church and never recognized any human control or authority outside of itself. There was nowhere an association of churches under one common ecclesiastical judicatory. Jesus Christ intended that His followers should form themselves into churches (not sects) and when in Matthew 18: 17, He says, "Tell it unto the Church," He has in mind the local Church in the place where the offense was committed. In this final appeal of the aggrieved party it cannot be supposable that the whole body of believers could be gotten together. The Church mentioned, therefore, must mean the local congregation. In the case of the licentious man, Paul refers both the exclusion and the restoration to the whole Church (1 Cor. 5: 1-5; 2 Cor. 11: 4, 5). He directs the Church at Corinth, when "gathered together" to "put away the wicked man from among yourselves," and afterward this punishment, which was inflicted of many was to be remitted by the same, when the offender had repented. Thus also, he directs the Church at Rome to "mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling and "turn away from them." The Lord in His epistles to the seven churches of Asia, clearly holds each Church as such wholly responsible for

its doctrine and its discipline; but had these churches been recognized, Episcopally or Presbyterially, the rebukes for unsound doctrine and life would have been directed to the session or the presbytery or to the bench of bishops, and not as they are to the local independent congregations. There is not to be found in all New Testament history a single example of a Church subordinating itself to an organization outside itself; but in all the counsels, in all the rebukes, in all the warnings, in all the encouragements, each one is recognized as independent and accountable only to God. The fact that the Church at Jerusalem had chosen seven deacons, did not obligate the Church at Antioch to choose seven. That the Church at Antioch should have deacons comes within the necessities of its life and activities, but the number is quite a different thing, which illustrates the independence of the local Church in all matters pertaining to its own life and activities. It seems conclusive that each Church of the Christians which meets in one place for religious worship, and for the carrying forward of matters pertaining to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, is a complete Church within itself, and as such is supreme in its own domain. Having entered into a covenant of faith it has the right and the

authority to perform anything and everything pertaining to itself in matters of government, in matters of business, in matters of worship, in matters of finance, indeed in all matters pertaining to its own life and labors and in no sense is it accountable to any other Church for its doctrine or its conduct, even though the other Church be of "the same faith and order." There is no evidence whatever that the primitive churches were national, or even provincial. There were churches in the province of Asia Minor, of Galatia, of Judea, of Samaria, and of others, too, but not one word is recorded that would lead us to suppose that these churches were in any sense provincial in any of the localities in which they were found.

It seems conclusive also that in the primitive churches, instead of one bishop ruling over more than one Church, sometimes more than one bishop was in charge of a single Church.

The Church at Jerusalem met at one time and at one place for worship, so did the Church at Antioch, so did the Church at Corinth, so did all the other churches of that time and so they do to-day, so they should have done, and so they should continue to do. It seems quite conclusive that each of these churches was independent of

each and all the others. No other Church, no matter where located, no matter how rich or influential, had any right whatsoever to assume arbitrary authority over another, no matter how small in membership, or poor in purse that other one might have been. Each one of these independent units was absolutely supreme in its own domain, and while they exercised no authority over any man's faith or brought any compulsory power to bear upon the conscience of any, they did manage their own affairs in the way that approved itself to them. Much and good authority could be cited outside the New Testament in favor of the independence of the local Church in the days of the apostles. Gibbon says, "The Societies which were instituted in the cities of the Roman Empire were united only by the ties of faith and charity. Independence and equality formed the basis of their internal constitution. Such was the mild and equal constitution by which Christians were governed, more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles. Every society formed within itself a separate and independent republic." The late Archbishop of Dublin, (Bishop Whateley) says, "It appears plainly from the sacred narrative that though the many churches which the apostles founded were branches of one

spiritual brotherhood, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the heavenly Head—though there was one Lord, one faith, one baptism for all of them, yet they were each a distinct, independent community on earth, united by the common principles on which they were founded, and by their mutual agreement, affection, and respect; but not having any one recognized head on earth, or acknowledging any sovereignty of one of these societies over others." Mosheim says, the independence of the primitive Church "is as clear as noonday."

It is safe to conclude that the Scriptures teach that a visible congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, having associated together in a covenant of faith and fellowship in the gospel, remaining steadfast in the teachings and doctrines of the apostles and in fellowship and in the breaking of bread, and in prayer, and having accepted the Holy Bible as the rule of faith and conduct, meeting at stated times for worship, is a Christian Church with all the rights, privileges, and duties of the Church at Jerusalem, and that in the domain of its own life it is absolutely supreme.

What the Local Church Has no Right To Do.

1. It has no right to adopt a creed, not even the Bible. The right to adopt the Bible as a creed, implies the right to reject it. The Bible

is not to be adopted, it is to be believed and practiced. There can be no Church in gospel order that does not believe and obey the gospel, and hence the formal adoption of it is unwarranted.

2. It has no right to formulate a doctrine. The doctrine is written in the Book.

I have often been asked to preach on the doctrines of the people called Christians. To all such requests I have invariably replied that the Christian Church, as such, has no doctrine, and more, it has no right to a formulated doctrine which might exist by reason of a vote of the Church. The doctrine is of God. It is older than the Church. It is written in the Book, and it is the duty of the Church to believe and practice the doctrine as it finds it revealed in God's Book. The doctrine of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, of repentance, of faith, of baptism, of forgiveness, of justification, of sanctification, of prayer, of heaven, of immortality, of rewards and punishment, is written in the Book. It is of God, and is eternal in character and duration and no man or number of men have any right to change one "jot or one tittle," add to, or take from, under penalty of having their names taken out of the Book of Life. With a charity as broad as truth itself, the Christian Church has stood, not for

formulated doctrine, but for an honest belief of the doctrine as written.

3. It has no right to appropriate a name except for local identification. The disciples were called Christians, and that being the family name the only right a local Church has, is to adopt a name that will localize it, for example, Bible Chapel, designates a local Church, and distinguishes that Church from Center Grove, and is the name of the meeting-house; but not the name of the congregation of Christians which worship within its walls.

Some years ago a gentleman said to the writer, and said it quite sharply too, "You people have no right to appropriate a name to yourselves which belongs to all the followers of Christ." I replied, "You are right, my brother, and I wish you would repeat your declaration." He did, and with more force than at the first, when I again replied, "You are absolutely right, and I wish that fact could be made known and emphasized everywhere."

"Now," said I, "seeing that we agree, will you kindly answer a question or two for me?" He replied that he would be glad to answer as many as I cared to ask. I asked how he got the name Christian. He said, by repenting of his sins and exercising faith in Jesus Christ. "Then," said I,

“you received the family name by being born into the family.” “Certainly,” said he. “Well,” said I, “that is the way I got the same name.” By repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I was made alive in Jesus Christ—born into the family of Christians. We both got the name in the same way. “Please tell me,” said I, “how you got the name Presbyterian.” He smiled and said, “I guess we have been doing the appropriating.” I said, “You certainly have.” We never appropriated the name. We simply refuse to appropriate any name no matter how desirable or suggestive it may be. We wear the family name and we wear no other.

4. It has no right to limit its fellowship by sectarian tests. Romans 14: 1-5. “But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above

another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.”

5. It has no right to enact rules that will bind men’s consciences.

6. It has no right to a name that includes all the followers of Christ, if its test of fellowship excludes some of the followers of Christ—indeed if it excludes but one of the followers of Christ.

What the Local Church Has a Right To Do.

1. To determine the time and place of its meetings for worship or for business.

2. To arrange with a minister for pastoral service, and to agree upon the plans of service and the amount to be contributed.

3. To provide for the collecting of money for pastoral or other current expenses.

4. To have a choir, or congregational singing, or an orchestra, or all of them, or none of them, as the Church may determine.

5. To organize an official board, and appoint all necessary committees.

6. To create departments of Church activities, and to appoint secretaries or superintendents over them.

7. To organize a Sunday-school, a Christian Endeavor Society, a Ladies’ Aid, a Men’s Brother-

hood, a Woman's Missionary Society, or any other organization which does not do violence to the teaching of the Scriptures.

8. To receive members and to dismiss them on stated days, in ways and by methods of their own choosing, provided the Bible instruction is not violated.

9. To determine the time of prayer-meetings, communion services, and other special or extraordinary occasions.

10. To determine the number of deacons needed and to ordain them, also to determine the names and number of all other officers needed for the carrying forward of the work which the Church has undertaken to do.

11. To elect such officers for special services as may from time to time be needed, and to appoint committees for the same purposes.

12. To determine the time and to plan for the special evangelistic meetings which the Church may desire to hold.

13. To determine the location, the size, the style, and the cost of its house of worship, the time of its dedication, and the order of service.

14. To hear from an offended brother of the effort made toward a reconciliation, and to have

it told to the Church if he failed to effect reconciliation.

15. To carry out the Scriptural instruction to let such an one be to them as an heathen man and a publican.

16. To combine, unite, federate, or associate with any number of other local churches in conference relationship, or to form an association or federation with other local churches for aggressive work in the Kingdom of the Christ.

17. Unless by joining a conference it transfers its right to the conference, it has the right to examine candidates for the ministry, and to ordain them thereto. Indeed that was the usual way among the Christian churches during the early years and it is quite questionable whether the right of the local Church is displaced in matters of ordination even by its conference associations.

Now let me call your attention to the fact that the things mentioned which the local Church has a right to do, are the things the local Church has always and ever been doing, and that, too, absolutely independent of all other local churches or an association of them. From every view-point from every angle of observation, the local Church is a perfect Church, with absolute rights and privileges which cannot be limited, annulled, added to,

or changed by any other Church in all the Kingdom of God. For myself I believe the local Church is absolutely supreme in its own domain in all matters pertaining to its faith and to its practice, with an absolute and perfect right to regulate its own affairs, independent of any and all other local churches or any combination of them. Of course in so far as it combines or unites with other churches in conference or association work, just so far does it obligate itself for co-operation, but no further, and unless hindered by the terms of association has a right at any time to withdraw.

The local Church has the right of deciding all matters which are not already decided by Scripture. Such things as may be determined by "Holy Writ," become unchangeable law to the Church. As has elsewhere been stated, the time and the place of meeting, the order of worship and all business matters as well as the observance of the ordinances are to be determined by the local Church. This right is inherent in it as a voluntary body, and its exercise is recognized as a duty by the reproofs administered to the whole congregation at Corinth, for disorderly conduct at the Lord's Supper. Furthermore, the epistles are directed to local Churches thus plainly, definitely,

and forcefully recognizing the right as well as the responsibility of each Church as a congregation with reference to conducting its own affairs.

A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A Christian Church is a congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, united in covenant, worshipping together, associated in the faith and in the fellowship of the gospel; practicing its precepts, observing its ordinances, recognizing and receiving Jesus Christ as the rightful ruler and supreme head of all; each member taking the Bible as his only rule of faith and practice, and dwelling together in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. Such a body of believers constitutes the body of Christ—a spiritual temple—the pillar and ground of the truth. Such churches are divinely instituted, and become the light-bearers to the world; they are ordained of God for His glory and the proclamation of His gospel and the establishment of His Kingdom; they exist for the edification of the saints, the conversion of sinners and the comfort of the sorrowing. They are not to make laws, but to obey and administer the laws which are written in the New Testament.

The law is written in the Book and it should be obeyed and administered by the Church. Now such a Church is single, separate, visible, independent, having its own officers, its own arrangement for worship and service; answerable to no other Church and having no authority over any other Church; it is bound to and under the law of Christ, but otherwise it is independent of, and free from the control and authority of all persons other than its own members.

Independent, but not Isolated.

The local Church is an independent unit, but not an isolated unit; it is a unit among a multitude of units which form one great whole. No Church can stand alone; churches are bound together making a community of churches and the tie is the mightiest which even God can make. Churches have a common faith; a common relationship to Christ; a common law; a common experience; a common life; a common hope; a common service; a common responsibility; and a common destiny. Thus each Church forms one in the great fellowship of churches, all of which and each of which is commonly effected in character and activity. The churches in any given locality should combine in conference relationship for the purpose of carrying forward in a united

way that which no Church could do single handed and alone. To thus combine is the obvious duty of local churches, and the purpose should be for evangelistic, missionary, educational, and benevolent work as authorized by the Scriptures or approved by the general judgment of the Conference. The united effort of churches in a stated interest is clearly set forth by the united effort of the Gentile churches for the relief of the Judean Christians, and the common support of Paul and other missionaries, who went forth to labor in the interest of the Kingdom. A Conference is composed of ministers and churches occupying a particular district and is purely a voluntary body; no Church is compelled to unite with it, and a man's call to preach the gospel is not determined by it; it has no ecclesiastical authority and holds the independence of the Church in matters of faith and doctrine inviolate; its official acts must be and are strictly confined to the objects, purposes, and methods as prescribed by its constitution; it may offer a friendly hand and Christian service to churches that may be rent and torn by dissention or otherwise troubled, but it has no power to discipline or dissolve them; it can at the last only have them withdraw from the Conference, or the Conference withdraw from

them; it has no right or authority to put a Church on trial, or in any way act as a court of review except as the character and conduct of a Church may effect its relation to the Conference. A Church cannot delegate to another body the rights and functions which Christ has committed to it as such, and hence a Conference is not a body that can in any sense whatever perform the duties of administering the ordinances, disciplining the unruly, receiving, or dismissing members, electing or displacing officers of a local Church, or doing any other thing that falls to the Church to do. There is no place in the plan and economy of the Church for the Episcopacy. Both the Episcopal and the Presbyterial form of government take from the local Church those rights and privileges which were prominent and dominant in the primitive churches. In the really Episcopal form, the ecclesiastical power belongs to the priesthood which exists in three orders: bishops, priests, and deacons, who constitute a hierarchy or priestly government. This is the form of the Roman Catholic Church—in which the pope is supreme bishop. The Presbyterial form of government is that form by which the reception of members and the Church discipline are committed to the session composed of the pastor and elders elected by the

congregation, and in which all ecclesiastical acts are subject to revision before higher Church courts composed of pastors and elders from many congregations. The contention herein maintained is that the Church constituted according to the New Testament is an independent congregation of believers with full right and authority to decide all matters concerning itself, and that its decisions are not subject to review, modification, or reversal by any other body of believers.

OFFICERS IN A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

If the Church is a divine institution, its officers must be divinely authorized and appointed. A few things should be kept in mind.

- One* Church officers are by divine authority.
- Two* No human authority can change, multiply, or abrogate them.
- Three* Nor can the power and right belonging to Church officers be increased or lessened by the acts of men.
- Four* Church officers being divinely established are to be received as God's appointed ones, and as such are to be perpetuated and remain unchanged to the end of time.

Five There are other officers which are proper and useful, but they are of human origin and authority and may be changed, increased, or discontinued according to the varying exigencies of the Church.

The officers of the Church are clearly and definitely named by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians. "Where he ascended on high, * * * And he gave some to be apostles; some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4: 8-13.)

Paul also speaks of the Church as having "bishops and deacons." (Phil. 1: 1.) (1 Tim. 3: 1-13.)

It would not be in keeping with the plan and purpose of this production to treat of the character or to define the work of the above named officers; but it should be said that quite evidently the offices of apostle and prophet were temporary, and ceased with the expiration of the necessity for their service; and that evangelist, teacher, and preacher, while not essential to the complete organization of the Church, exist because of a necessity for their service, but certainly they can have no official authority in the Church. The

Church as constituted by the New Testament rule has but two classes of officers—pastors and deacons. It is quite evident that in Scripture these are the only officers mentioned whose qualifications and duties are stated in connection with the ordinary offices of the Church.

Pastors.—It seems conclusive that the terms presbyter, bishop, pastor, are designations of one office and used interchangeably throughout the New Testament. The elders of the Church at Ephesus are called overseers. Paul in his charge to Timothy, concerning the ordination of the class of officers, speaks of them interchangeably as elders and bishops, and Peter exhorts the elders to take the oversight or act as bishops of the flock.

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and

the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God.—Acts 20: 17-28.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly.—Titus 1: 5-7.

The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. 1 Peter 5: 1, 2.

And in further testimony of the claim that these various terms designate but one office we cite the fact that the *qualifications and duties were and are identical*.

Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach; no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.—1 Tim. 3: 1-7.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge.—Titus 1: 5.

It may be safely concluded that an elder was,

1. An aged person whether male or female.

Likewise ye younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.—1 Peter 5: 5.

The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity.—1 Tim. 5: 2.

2. A member of the Jewish Sanhedrin or a presiding officer in a Jewish Synagogue.

Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.—Matt. 15: 2.

Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.—Luke 9: 22.

3. A patriarch or prophet.

For therein the elders had witness borne to them.—Hebrews 11: 2.

4. A Christian bishop or pastor, one ordained to preach the gospel.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly.—Titus 1: 5-7.

The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the suffering of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.—1 Peter 5: 1, 2.

Briefly stated the duties of the pastor may be mentioned in the following order :

1. To direct the public religious instruction of the Church in the pulpit and all the departments of Church work.

2. To administer the ordinances of the Church.

3. To preside at all meetings of the Church whether for worship or for business.

4. To watch over and develop the members in their personal experience and conduct, to exhort, reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and gentleness. They are in a word the spiritual guides of the churches over which they preside; and they should remember that the powers and duties belonging to the pastoral office, and exercised within the sphere of pastoral relations are the functions devolving upon them by divine authority; but they should remember, too, that inasmuch as they received their office through the Church, if these powers are abused or duties neglected, the Church may take the office from them.

DEACON—THE ORIGIN OF THE OFFICE

The first deacons were not chosen by Christ, but we should keep in mind that they were chosen by the authority and under the direction of the inspired apostles, which carries with it

the same force as though done under the personal direction of Christ Himself. The story of choosing and ordaining the first deacons is told in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, from the first to the sixth verses inclusive. In this brief story we have set forth

The necessity of the office,
The qualifications of the officer,
The manner of election, and
The method of ordination.

While it is true that these seven were not called deacons in this connection, yet men possessing these qualifications, and occupying the same positions were so designated by the New Testament writers, hence the name need not be questioned. The office originated in two conditions of the Church.

One—The Temporal Necessities of the Poor.—Jesus had always taken great interest in the poor, a fact well known to the apostles; they had seen His interest in the poor people and His care for them. The poor people not only followed Jesus, but they joined the Church. There seems not to have been an equitable distribution of the common funds among the disciples. The Grecians murmured against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. The

apostles who up to this period seem to have had control of the treasury, no longer had time to attend to the secular affairs of the Church. The Church was organized for worship, but not for service. The poor were there; they must be cared for and the deaconship was the solution of the problem. These deacons were God's first ministers to the poor. The Seventy had been sent to the lost sheep of the House of Israel; the apostles had been commissioned to preach the gospel to the whole world; Paul was to be a special messenger to the Gentiles, and the deacon was to minister to the poor.

Two—The All Absorbing Task of the Ministry.
—These twelve men had not been ordained to secular service; they were not appointed to serve tables; they had been commissioned to preach, and they felt the divine limitation and sought release. It is probable also, that attention to this part of the work would have created prejudice and lessened and hindered their work in spiritual things. For these reasons the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples together and said:

It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among yourselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the

whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Phillip, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. (Acts 6: 1-6.)

That a Church can exist and be in gospel order for a time, without deacons, seems not to admit of doubt, for the Church at Jerusalem, previous to the election of the seven deacons mentioned is a case in point; but a Church is not fully organized until deacons are elected and ordained. Deacons are not essential to the being of a Church, but to the well being.

THE METHOD OF CHOOSING DEACONS

One: Chosen of the Church.—"Look ye out among yourselves;" examine; make inquiry; investigate; pry into, etc., etc. But the emphatic injunction is found in the words, "Among yourselves." This is a Church affair; do not go outside your membership; this is a matter in which the world hath neither part nor lot.

Two.—Chosen by the Church.—It was distinctively a Church matter, and in it the world was not to be recognized. The fact that they were to be chosen of the Church, and by the Church, is a convincing testimony, and conclusive argument in favor of the independence of the local Church.

The authority to choose from the Church and by the Church, involves the whole doctrine of the independence of the Church. The matter was referred to, and acted upon, by the whole multitude of the disciples. There were two methods of election in New Testament times, one by ballot, the other by lot. The lot, as in case of the election of Matthias, was by writing two names on strips of parchment, perhaps several duplicates of them, and then shaken up; the one first drawn out decided the choice. It is altogether likely that this method was used in electing the seven deacons. The other method was the ballot, or the stretching forth of the hand in approval. When the churches chose Titus, as mentioned in 2 Cor. 8:19, this method was used. The word chosen in the above reference is from *cheirotoneo*, which means to stretch forth the hand. The same word is used in Acts 14:23, and is translated "ordain" in the common version, but "appointed" in the Revised. The word is a compound from *cheir*, the hand, and *teino*, to vote, or choose by holding forth the hand.

THE REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

These men were not to be picked up in any haphazard way, but were to be carefully chosen, and that, too, after mature deliberation and earnest prayer. The qualifications, as set forth in the

New Testament, and in force to-day, are very definite and imperative. In addition to the requirements mentioned at the time the first seven were chosen, are the ones mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to Timothy. He says, "Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless. Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 3: 8-13.

THE OFFICE NOT CONFINED TO MEN

That women were chosen to this sacred office is too well established by the Scriptures and Church history to be questioned, and as the limits of this work forbid any lengthy discussion of the matter, the reader must be referred, with the few references made, to Church history for further investigation, should he so desire. Phoebe and Priscilla were deaconesses, and fellow-servants with Paul. It is a well-known fact that Pliny put

two deaconesses to the torture, but the pagan was compelled to acknowledge that they were faithful, even in suffering. Church historians are in agreement upon the fact of their appointment, their ordination, and their service. Neander says:

Besides the deacons, there were appointed also deaconesses, for the female portion of the communities, because the free access of men to the female sex, especially in the East, where custom demanded so careful a separation of the sexes, might excite suspicion and give offense. If the women, in conformity with their natural destination, were excluded from the offices of teaching and Church government, yet the peculiar qualifications of the sex were now claimed, in this way, as peculiar gifts for the service of the communities. By means of such deaconesses the gospel could be introduced into the bosom of families, where, owing to the customs of the East, no man could gain admittance. They were also bound, as Christian wives and mothers of tried experience in all the relations of their sex, to assist the younger women of the communities with their counsel and encouragement.

Dr. Adam Clarke says:

“There were deaconesses in the primitive Church whose duty it was to attend to the female converts at baptisms, instruct the candidates for baptism,” etc. “It is evident that they were ordained to their office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop,” etc. “In the tenth or eleventh century the order became extinct in the Latin Church; but continued in the Greek Church to the end of the twelfth century.” Clarke, on Rom. 16: 1. Summerbell, page 135.

In the summing up of their duties we have seen that they visited the women who had been imprisoned for their faith in Jesus Christ; that they baptized their own sex, and later on, when

men baptized women, they dressed and redressed them for and after the baptismal service.

THE DUTIES OF THE DEACON

Their duties were then, and are now :

1. To have the oversight of the poor.
2. To serve the tables of the poor.
3. To serve the table of the Lord (the communion).
4. To serve the table of the minister.

Of course it must be understood that these duties are not to be interpreted to mean that they serve at the tables of the poor, and at the table of the minister, but rather that they see that the poor and the minister have tables, and that they have something on them to eat. In many churches now the office of deacon is only nominal and in no sense practical. In all too many churches the duty of the deacon means nothing more than the passing of the emblems on communion days, by which is ignored the Biblical requirements, and as a rule the Church suffers greatly from its action. The writer is of the opinion that no condition can exist that will justify a Church in departing from the apostolic order, or in any way neglecting to do things required by the Bible in the government of its affairs. The apostolic order must be established and obeyed, or the Church

cannot attain to apostolic success in spiritual things. No human plans, no matter how wisely devised, or how generally used, can be substituted for the divine order and government of the Church, and he who does such things should fear lest the condemnation of God should come upon him. The only law-maker for the Church is its builder and head. The Church is not to make laws, but should obey and administer the laws, as given by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The duties of the deacon did not end, nor do they end now, when these tables have been provided for. The deacon is a spiritual officer of the Church, as well as a server of tables. The word translated deacon, *Diakonas*, is also translated minister, servant, ministers, servants, deacon, deaconess, and bishop. "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Matt. 23: 11. "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Phillippi, with the bishops and deacons." Philippians 1: 1. "What then is Apollos, and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him." 1 Corinthians 3: 5. "I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ." Romans 16: 1. "Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever

would become great among you shall be your minister." Matthew 20: 26. "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power." Ephesians 3: 7.

Phillip was one of the seven ordained deacons, and Phillip preached and baptized, and so far as we know without other authority than that given him by the original ordination. This leads me to say that the ordinations of preachers and deacons in the Christian Church, so far as known to me, are exactly alike. In the ordination of the seven, the apostles enjoined the multitude to make the selection, and when that was done, the apostles prayed, and then laid their hands upon them. They did not lay their hands upon them during the prayer, as is often done by presbyteries now, but "when they had prayed." Now in that manner the writer was ordained a minister of the Word, and in that manner has assisted in the ordination of ministers and deacons, and were he a deacon with only the ordination of a deacon, he would not hesitate to preach if he could, nor would he hesitate to baptize should he be called upon to do so, especially in the absence of the pastor, or minister, regularly in charge. The writer does not think that he oversteps the bounds of pro-

priety when he says that the ordination of a preacher carries with it the obligation upon his part to be true to the Church that confers the rite. When a preacher changes his views, so as to affect his standing in the denomination which ordained him, he is morally bound to surrender his credentials, or withdraw, according to the methods of the Church. To do otherwise is to misrepresent the Church conferring the ordination, and do it dishonor and injury. Now what is true of the preacher, is true of the deacon. In accepting the office and submitting to ordination, the deacon lays himself under obligation to be true to the office and the Church in which he holds it, and when he can no longer so do, he is duty bound to resign and surrender his credentials as an officer of that Church. This does not mean that his ordination is annulled, that could not be. Holy hands once imposed, are imposed for all time, and so the deacon is ordained for life, but his term of service in any particular Church may be, and indeed should be, determined by a vote of the Church. The writer is an ordained minister of the Word, and that ordination is for life, but the term that he may serve any particular Church as pastor is not determined by the ordination, but by the will of the Church which he serves. To

illustrate this point the writer may be pardoned a personal reference. Once when I was in the pastorate a brother, who had been ordained as a deacon in another Church, was received to membership. Soon afterward he said to me, "I suppose that I am now a deacon in this Church." I said, "No, you are not." "Why," said he, "I have been ordained, and you have taken me into membership." "Yes," said I, "that is what we have done; we have taken you into membership, but we have not chosen you a deacon yet, and most certainly did not by receiving you into membership." Later on, he was elected deacon, but not until the Church was convinced of his fitness for the place. The number of deacons in any one Church must of course be determined by the size of the membership, the work to be done, and other considerations which will appear to those who have the work in hand.

OTHER OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

So far, we have dealt only with the officers which have Biblical authority for their existence and service, but there are other officers which grow out of the character and conditions of the Church, and the work it has to do, and while there is no Biblical authority or example for them, or their occupants, there are many and valid reasons

why they should be, one of which is, let all things be done decently and in order.

Clerk.—Each local Church should have a competent, faithful clerk, who not only attends the business sessions of the Church and its Official Board, but who keeps an accurate record of all proceedings of the Church, the names of the members, the date of admission, the date of baptism, whether admitted by letter or upon confession, date and reason for all dismissals and withdrawals, together with a brief history of the Sunday services, the attendance, the text of the sermon, the name of the preacher, and such notations as his judgment approves. The clerk of the Church should be the connecting link between the Church and all individuals and organizations with which the Church has to do.

Treasurer.—Each local Church should have a treasurer, who should be chosen upon the facts of his honesty in business, and his efficiency in service. Simply because one is good is not sufficient reason for electing one to a place of trust in the house of the Lord.

Trustees.—The Common Law of the land provides that no trust shall fail for the want of a trustee, and each local Church should see to it that

the legal number of competent trustees are elected in accordance with the requirements of the state laws, to whose care and keeping all Church property should be entrusted. In this connection the writer would like to recommend to each and every local Church of the Christians, to deed its property in trust to the Conference in which the Church has membership.

DISCIPLINE

The word discipline is a military term, and refers to the training of soldiers for service. It does not have to do so much with what we ordinarily think when we think discipline, as it does with the training of the members of a local congregation for service in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The life of Christ in the soul must be developed, and the hands trained in service, and the discipline of the Church has to do with this. Discipline includes all the methods by which a Church educates its members for service, and fits them for heaven; it includes private instruction, the maintenance of the prayer and social services, and every other process by which the Church deals with the souls of men. Evangelism and training are the two divine lines of Church activity, and under discipline both of these may be included. Of course discipline in a narrower

sense denotes the action of the Church with reference to offenses committed by the individual member, either against the Church as a whole, or some one or more members of it, and in the light of the above statement I shall mention:—

I. Mutual Watch-care. This is rather preventive than disciplinary. Were the members of the Church to watch over each other in loving tender care in the earnest spirit of the religion of their Lord, there would be but few instances of personal offense, and but rare cases of individuals going astray. A true Christian watch-care, a tender regard for each other's welfare, is the highest development of Christian life, and the best service a Church can render to its members. David said: "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be as oil upon the head; let not my head refuse it: for even in their wickedness shall my prayer continue." Psalm 141:5. And Paul lays emphasis upon this beautiful service when he says: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1. "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suf-

fering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Col. 3:12-14. Even a close approach of the Church to this grand ideal of Christian service changes the atmosphere of the entire membership, and charges it with vitalizing forces that become an irresistible influence in developing human life into the life and character of Jesus Christ.

II. The Adjustment of Private and Personal Grievances. Offenses seem inevitable, even among men who profess to follow their Lord. The Master said they should come, but pronounced a woe upon the ones by whom they should come. When they do arise in the membership of a Church, there is but one line to follow, but one course to pursue, and that is clearly laid down in the New Testament. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also,

let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican." Matt. 18: 15, 16, 17. It should be observed here that if the offended brother should fail in his duty, then the offending one is to take the initiative, and seek the interview. If this fails, then one or two judicious fellow members are to be chosen as witnesses, and the whole case is to be heard before them. If this should fail, then the whole matter is to be told to the Church, the proof adduced and the opportunity given for defense. Should the offense be proven, the offender is to make reparation, or no longer be considered a member of the body. It should be observed further that there is no substitute, or discretionary rights, granted by the divine law. The duty is imperative and should at once be taken up and discharged. The one object ever and always to have in mind is the saving of the brother. The Church and the individual member should always think of what it means to lose a brother.

III. An Offense Against the Whole Church.

Should an offense be committed against the Church it should be dealt with in exactly the same way that individual offenses are handled. In case of a public offense against the Church, the deacons, representing the Church, should at once see the offending, or the offended member, and should

they fail to adjust the matter, then some additional members should go with them, and should that method fail to bring about a reconciliation, then the whole Church should hear of the matter and pass upon it. These are the Biblical ways, and God always honors His way, and certainly Jesus knew better than we how to deal with private and public offenses. The Church that follows His instruction does well, and the Church that fails to follow His instruction need not expect His help, or His blessing.

Exclusion is the final act of Church power. It is solemn withdrawal of fellowship, and the erasing of the name from the roll of members. This act can only affect the membership of the individual in the local Church. He was born into the Kingdom, if in at all, but he was voted into the local membership, and by vote that membership may be discontinued; but let it be remembered that no vote of any local Church can affect one way or the other the standing of the individual in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. A Scriptural discipline administered in loving tenderness and sincerity, is essential to the welfare of the Church and the good of the individual, and the Church should never hesitate in the discharge of this divinely authorized duty. In thirty and more

years of pastoral service, I recall one case of discipline. I had in my membership a brother who had been brought up in a Church that had ways of proceeding against an offender different from that of the Christians. He felt that a brother had offended him, and lodged with me, as his pastor, the complaint, and asked to have a Church trial. I publically announced that the trial would occur on a certain evening, and that the whole Church would be expected to be present. I did not need to urge an attendance. The house was filled at a very early hour. After prayer I announced the purpose of the meeting, and called for the brethren involved to come forward, which they did. In the presence of the entire congregation I asked the offended brother if he felt himself aggrieved, and if the brother by his side was the offender. He answered very promptly and very decidedly, *yes*. I then asked if he had taken the first step in the proceedings against the offender, and read to him the instruction of Christ in the matter. He said he had not. I simply said the case is suspended until the first step in the proceedings is taken, and at once pronounced the benediction. I never heard of the matter afterward, except that the two men had adjusted their

differences and became good friends and fellow-servants in the Lord.

The following principles have been set forth thus far in this discussion.

First. That the Church which Christ Himself is building is His spiritual body on the earth, and at the last He will present this Church to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. In the membership of this Church is found all the good and the true, of all ages, countries, climes, and conditions of men.

Second. That a local Church, or congregation, is absolutely independent, though vitally related to all other churches and congregations of believers.

Third. That a divine constitution of the Church is given in form of government authorized by Christ.

Fourth. That all members of the local Church have equal rights and privileges in matters of worship, and in conducting the business affairs of the congregation.

Fifth. That the officers of the Church, as authorized by the divine constitution, are pastors, called also bishops, presbyters, elders, and over-

seers, whose oversight, authority, and duties are mainly in spiritual things; and deacons, whose official duties are chiefly an oversight of the temporal concerns of the Church, and in general as helpers of the pastor. The qualifications for both officers are definitely set forth by Paul in his letters to Timothy and to Titus.

RECEIVING MEMBERS INTO THE LOCAL CHURCH

When one comes forward in the public audience and confesses Christ, should the Church be asked to vote upon one's reception? Yes, if such a one desires to be enrolled as a member of that particular body of believers.

"Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ," brings one into the Church that Jesus is building upon the rock, and no one is voted into that Church. One must be born into it, but being born into the Church that Jesus Christ is building, does not make one a member of any local organization, and certainly such membership is desirable and profitable.

Here are four or five different congregations in the same city. They may all be of the same faith and order—all Christian churches—and one is

born into the kingdom of God, and desires membership in one of the five, it seems to be perfectly proper for that local Church to extend to such applicant the blessing of membership by a hearty vote, and a good old-fashioned handshake. Such vote has nothing whatsoever to do with the admission of one into the Kingdom of God. We mistake when we conclude that receiving one into the local Church is the same as receiving one into the Church that Jesus is building, for with membership in the latter we have nothing whatsoever to do. The Lord adds to the Church daily such as are being saved. The local Church holds the supreme right in all matters pertaining to itself, and nothing could be more fitting than for such Church to vote membership to one who seeks it and whose life and conduct will harmonize with the rules that govern that particular congregation of believers. Times of meeting, the personnel of the Church officary, the ability of the minister, the relationship of members, and many another thing may have to do in deciding one's choice of local membership, all of which no doubt had been previously determined by a vote of the body, and now that it deals with an addition to its membership the logical thing to do is to vote upon the application.

If the Scriptures were silent (but they are not) the general practices among men would suggest the propriety of such expression. As far as known to the writer all fraternal organizations vote upon the reception of members. A man must not only be a mason, but he must belong to some local lodge of masons. The enrolment as a member of any particular lodge could not make him a mason, nor does the vote of the lodge granting him membership make him such, but because he is a mason he seeks to be enrolled. The vote of the local Church cannot make one a Christian, nor will the enrolment of one's name on any ing him membership make him such, but because one is a Christian one seeks such enrolment somewhere among some local body of believers.

By such membership one becomes specifically identified and acknowledges his obligation and responsibility to some locality and where his activities may be directed so as to accomplish the greatest good for the cause. When it comes to dismissing one from membership a vote is taken and indeed voting is the usual method of deciding almost every question among our churches, and an exception to this rule should not be made when one is to be received to membership.

A careful study of the question will show that Jesus laid the foundation of His Church on common sense principles and the world in its organizations has adopted His principles of government and find that they work satisfactorily, and local churches would do well to keep to the strait and narrow way marked out by the Master.

The fact that the Church in any locality is the Church in its organized capacity, and a sovereign body in itself, transacting its own business without interference or dictation from any other Church or outside body, either preachers or laymen, is a strong testimony in favor of its right and duty to receive by public approval any who might apply for membership.

The churches mentioned by Paul were not simply promiscuous gatherings of Christians for prayer and praise, but were Christians organized for service, to which the command "Let everything be done decently and in order" was given. Churches so organized are to transact business for the Lord's Kingdom and the whole organization is to participate in all the business, so that when it comes to receiving members, a vote of that particular Church or congregation is certainly not only in order, but a very impressive and stimulating expression of their willingness to grant member-

ship to the applicant, and if that be followed with an old-time cordial handshake it becomes all the more so.

CHOOSING A PASTOR

There is nothing we do which demands more care, or is worthy of more thoughtful consideration, than the choosing of a pastor, and yet frequently nothing is done more carelessly or with so little thought. The misfits in pastoral service, and the limitations in many pastorates, reveal the careless and inefficient way by which we do the most important things. There is a lamentable want of wisdom manifested, both by congregation and preacher, when it comes to the matter of engaging a pastor.

The average Church exercises less sense in this matter, though of such vital importance, than a prudent man does in buying a horse or a cow for his use on the farm. The many churches longing for another man, and the many men anxious for more congenial fields, is an earnest plea for a carefully devised plan by which the many evils of the past may not be repeated and future mistakes and misfits avoided. The way the pastor

is often chosen, is to throw open the pulpit to the innumerable candidates that may choose to come. Their personal request to be heard, or the desire of some personal friend or admirer, is quite sufficient to secure for each one in turn a hearing. The people are often encouraged to take a side, and stand for the man they like to hear preach, and do not hesitate to say that they know that the Church will lose some members, and some money, too, if their particular preacher is not employed. Then, sometimes they sing their little song:

I know something I won't tell.

When the candidates have all been heard, and the Church thoroughly divided and the members worked up to fever heat in their effort to secure their favorite, then a meeting of the Church is called to decide the all-important matter of a preacher for the "coming year." Their prices have been secured, and often the original amount reduced in order to increase their influence with the brethren, and with everybody ready for final struggle they go into session. Deacon Economy is made chairman, and opens the meeting with prayer, in which he asks the Lord to direct their minds to the right man, which, in his judgment, means the one who has named the lowest price to the committee. But to Brother Selfish it means

the man who can get the most done, calling on him for the least amount of service.

And so each one determines who the right man is, and leaves the Lord very little to do in the matter. When the meeting is ready for business, one after another presents his favorite candidate, and lays particular stress upon his ability to do the thing which, in his judgment, the others do not want done, which they insist is greatly needed in that particular community. One wants an old-fashioned preacher, one wants a new-fashioned preacher, one wants a good singer, one wants one that will not forget the people, another wants one that will be popular with the young people, one wants one that will be sociable, another wants one that will not lower his dignity, one wants one that will call on the members, another wants one that will study and prepare his sermons, one wants one that is interested in missions, another wants one that will take care of the local Church, one wants one that is interested in education, another wants one that can preach to the common people, one wants one that will take all the collections, another wants one that will not always be harping about money, one wants one that keeps up with the times, another wants one that was like the good old preachers of his boyhood days.

Some want him to preach loud, some want him to preach low, some want him to preach long, some want him to preach brief, some want him to preach fast, some want him to preach slow, some want him to preach on doctrinal subjects, some on practical subjects, some want him to dress well and look tidy, and others think a fop of a preacher is the "awfulest" thing in the world. And thus they go on until they are ready to vote, when lo and behold, the man they want cannot be found! He is dead. He died a good many years before.

There is another way of choosing a pastor that is evil, and always evil, and that is to start a subscription for two candidates, with the understanding that the one receiving the largest amount shall be "the preacher." The writer knew a Church that at one time had three candidates, but could not agree upon any one of them. One was a holiness man, one was given to abusing the members of the Church for their failures, and the other a faithful man of average ability as a preacher. The Church agreed to start three subscriptions, and the one to whom the most money was subscribed should be called. The result was that the worldly people rallied to the man that pleased them, because of his caustic way of dealing with the faulty members, and the Church had for one year

a preacher "*hired*" by the world and for which he preached, to the great detriment of the Church and the growth of righteousness in that community. Never start a subscription for a preacher. That will work harm and only harm every time. Take your subscription, if taken at all, for the Church, no matter who the preacher may be. In raising funds for Church purposes the preacher should never be named.

There is a way to choose a pastor and a right way, too. A pastor is a preacher, plus his ability to do pastoral work among the people, and choosing one is manifestly the Lord's work and hence every step taken by the congregation should be in a humble spirit of submission and dependence on Him. The prayers of the Church ought to make it sure that the coming pastor will be the right man, for if he comes in answer to their prayers for guidance it cannot be otherwise. Let me suggest:—

First. That in selecting a pastor all preliminary work be intrusted to the Official Board of the Church, or to a committee carefully chosen for the special duty of investigating and reporting their findings to the Church, and not to the entire congregation, as is often done.

Second. The Official Board, or Special Committee, thus charged with such duty should first of all make a list of eligible men, and men who might be especially desired by the Church. From this list should then be eliminated (a) all such as the Board, or Committee, has reason to think could not be induced to leave their present field of labor. (b) All who ought not to be tempted to leave their present field of labor, no matter how desirable they might be. (c) All those who, no matter how desirable and efficient elsewhere, might be unfit for their particular pulpit. (d) And all who are pulpit seekers and who make frequent changes in their pastoral relations.

Third. Before any of the men thus selected should be written to, or any consideration given them, the Board, or Committee, should make diligent inquiry as to the following:

1. Is he a believer in the fundamental truths of Christianity?—such as the Divinity of Jesus Christ; the atonement for sin; the necessity of the new birth, and the inspiration of the Bible, for a man in holy orders who does not believe and teach these things cannot do the work of an evangelist, nor feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer, and no greater calamity could befall a Church than to have its

pulpit occupied by one recreant to truth and false to the sacred vows of ordination.

2. Inquiry should be made concerning his personal character, for though a man may preach well, unless he lives well his preaching is vain. Is he a loyal citizen? Is he a good neighbor? Is he a kindly man and godly in his home? Is he honest in his dealings? Does he pay his debts promptly and fully? Is he trustworthy in his personal character and conduct?

3. As to his spirituality—and here let us not mistake. To be tender hearted is not spirituality; loud and boisterous utterances, ignoring reason and good manners, and many other things of like character, are not spirituality. A common sense religion, manifesting itself in personal faith and spotless conduct is of far more value than the mere sentiment of it, but it yet remains true that nothing needs emphasis and expression more than spirituality, and Churches seeking pastors should not overlook this supremely important qualification in the man they call.

4. Diligent and adequate inquiry should be made regarding his pastoral character. Is he faithful, prompt and efficient as a pastor? Does he visit his families? Does he know his people? Does he call on, and pray with the sick? Has he

influence with the young people of the Church? Does he take an interest in the Sunday-school, the Christian Endeavor Society, and other organizations of the Church?

5. As to his ability to administer in Church matters. How does he get along with his official members? Is he dictatorial, or considerate in relation to the business affairs of the Church? Is he in harmony with the Ladies' Aid Society, the Missionary Society, and other auxiliary organizations of the Church?

6. As to his family. It is true that the wife is not "nominated in the bond" but it is also true that she is bound to be a very important factor in the problem of pastoral service. Many an incompetent minister succeeds because of the intelligent, faithful service of his wife, while many a competent one fails because of the frivolities and indiscretion of a helpmate that does not help.

7. Having been assured of the things above mentioned, it is time to find out whether or not the man can preach, for his business is to preach, and his commission is confined to that. He may do other things, but this thing he must do; he must preach. It may not be always advisable to have the man selected to visit the Church before the call is formally extended, and many good men

refuse to "candidate," but on the other hand, it is but fair to minister and Church that they see each other and to a degree at least understand the conditions and circumstances under which they are to live. A wise preacher will, when visiting a Church, avoid the "star sermon." Some Churches prefer to send committees to visit the Church of the prospective man, and, unknown to him, hear him preach an average sermon under the usual conditions of his life. This method has its advantages, but it is not wholly free from weakness and limitation.

The safest way to proceed in such an important matter is by prayer and common sense methods, and a pastor thus secured is likely to prove efficient and satisfactory, and continue long in the good graces of his people, while the preacher in common garb, who comes down the street displaying a list of organizations needed, a stereopticon, and plan for efficiency, may draw for a while, but it will be found that he can tarry, he can tarry but a night. The pastor's life, conduct, and efficiency are well set forth in the following lines by Dryden :

The proud he tamed, the penitent he cheered,
Nor to rebuke the rich offended feared;
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought
A living sermon of the truths he taught.

THE PREACHER

HIS CALL AND COMMISSION

To be a minister of Jesus Christ is to be called of God to the greatest work ever committed to man. The ministry is not a mere matter of human preference, but is of divine appointment. It is not a profession to be chosen, but a calling to be received. Jesus said to His disciples:

“Ye did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you.” “As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”

Among the last things He said to His disciples was:

“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth, Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, was not present at the time that Jesus commissioned the disciples, but was called to the same work, as he puts it, “As one born out of due time.” He declares that his apostleship was not of man, but of God. “For I make known to you, brethren, as

touching the gospel which was preached by me that it is not after man; For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ."

It is interesting to find how the different writers of the epistles introduce themselves by one simple phrase, which indicates their call to the gospel ministry. Paul, who had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, Peter the impulsive but devoted fisherman of Galilee, James the practical son of Zebedee, and the loving-hearted John, all speak of themselves as "The servant of Jesus Christ."

I know that there is a divine vocation for every man; that the farmer, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the doctor, the teacher, the mason, the artificer in brass and iron, and all others are called to do their work and may truly say that they are "Servants of Jesus Christ," but above the call given to all men there comes to the minister of the Word such a consciousness of his life's work that like Paul, he feels, "For if I preach the gospel I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Paul seems to think that he might be entitled to some glory for preaching the gospel without charge to them, but he could not glory in being a preacher of the gospel, for God laid upon

him the necessity. Paul would say I have received both the office and the grace with which I execute the office from God. I have not only His authority to preach, but that authority obliges me to preach; "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Dr. Clark, in commenting on this expression of Paul, says: "As every genuine preacher receives his commission from God alone, it is God alone who can take it away. Woe to that man who runs when God has not sent him; and woe to him who refuses to run, or who ceases to run, when God has sent him."

The man who enters the sacred calling aright does not follow some caprice of his will, but what he believes to be a distinct call from heaven. God has not left the publication of the message of salvation to any loose and uncertain methods, but ever calls His messengers with the same divine interest and care, and clothes them with the same authority included in the first great call and commission. The true minister of Jesus Christ must speak the Word of God and not his own. He is an ambassador from the court of heaven and if he speak, he must speak as the oracle of God. To an ancient preacher God said, "Preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," and to another He said: "Be not afraid because of them; for I am

with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah." "Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before them." The man who goes forth to preach must go in the consciousness of God's choice of him and of God's will expressed through him as an ambassador.

The late Joseph Parker says :

Ministers are often asked by young men how to enter the ministry. This question seems to arise out of the conception that the ministry is a profession. My answer to such men is: Examine yourselves, talk out the matter in secret communion with God, and then enter the ministry by entering it. This does not exclude any wise arrangements for preliminary culture; but it often helps to determine whether that culture should be undertaken, and what the range of that culture ought to be. How do men learn to swim? Often by plunging into the water. We learn to do many things simply by doing them. As a matter of fact, a man is either a preacher, or he is not a preacher. I repeat the doctrine which I have laid down again and again. The matter begins in a deep conviction on the part of the man himself; then it passes into the region of public experiment; then it may become the subject of friendly consultation, especially with Christian pastors and leaders; and then final responsibility rests upon the man himself. I have never undertaken to introduce any man into the ministry—I have encouraged many; but the responsibility I have always left with the men themselves. I began my own ministry under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by standing up in the open air and talking to anybody who cared to gather around me. If they invited me to go again, I accepted the invitation as a divine sign. I went from place to place, standing upon blocks of wood, standing in carts and wagons, standing on broad walls, or ledges of rock, and telling the peasants

who halted to hear me that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that I have been entrusted with an invitation to them all to come to the cross, to receive pardon. Under this call I have labored for forty years without ever changing my doctrine or suspecting my credentials. I will be no party to organizing a ministry which sets pedantic limits on its official sanctions. I will support no college that looks upon scholarship as an essential to entrance. I live now to protest against the degradation of the Christian ministry into a "learned profession." By all means let the ministry be instructed and even learned in a profound sense; but never let it exclude the men who have companied with Jesus for many a day, and have received from His own lips the commission to go forth and teach the gospel of salvation.

There is a sense in which every man has a divine vocation, and that any man who has the desire and the ability may call sinners to repentance; but He whom God wants to preach His Word, him He calls, for no man taketh the honor to Himself, and no man can with any assurance of authority represent the Kingdom of God unless he be commissioned and sent.

To the writer the most beautiful picture of all pictures is that of Jesus Christ in the synagogue at Nazareth, just after His return from the temptation in the wilderness, and His contest with Satan. He stands up to read. He is yet a young man; the glow of youth is on His cheek, and the glory of young manhood enthroned upon His brow. He is straight, tall, and commanding, the fire of enterprise is in His eye, and the resonance

of love in His voice; a picture of rugged, stalwart, pure, unsullied young manhood devoted to a cause, and consecrated to a purpose. In His reading He outlines His life-work. He says, I am—

To preach good tidings to the poor; I am
To proclaim release to the captives; I am
To proclaim the recovering of sight to the blind;
I am

To set at liberty them that are bruised; I am
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord;
but I can do it. I have been called. I am qualified.
I am prepared; the Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
I have been anointed, I can do it.

When He would send men out to do exactly what He had been anointed to do and had done, He had them tarry at Jerusalem until they, too, were anointed for their work. But were there no other proofs or suggestions of the divine call other than the names given to the preachers of righteousness, they would be sufficient to establish the call beyond reasonable doubt. They are called servants, chosen vessels, shepherds, overseers, stewards, and ambassadors.

All these names imply selection, and appointment in the absence of which there can be no authority. Certainly no one would suppose that a

steward would assume the duties and responsibilities of the office uncalled, unchosen, and unappointed. But when you consider that word "ambassador," you are face to face with conditions which forever settle the question of the preacher's call. Paul says, "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ."

Tell me, please, how there can be an ambassador without previous appointment? If it be said, that this is restricted to the apostles, we answer that the epistles were not written in the name of Paul only, but of Timothy, also, and hence include other ministers besides those directly included in the apostolic circle. Every one knows that the essence of ambassadorial office lies in the appointment which is made by the government, or sovereign, making it. An ambassador unappointed would not only be destitute of authority and without power, but he would be reprehensible, to say the least. Earthly rulers insist upon the right to appoint their representatives, saying that by such means, only, can the integrity of the government be maintained, and in this all thinking men concur, for no man would for a moment sanction a self-constituted ambassador to the government of China, as a representative of this country, though there are some men who think that the great God, the

supreme Sovereign of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, so loose in His methods and so averse to formalities, that He will allow any little jackanapes to set himself up in the ambassador business. Is not the government of the Almighty infinitely more important than any, yea, than all of the governments of earth? and shall the governments of men outdo the government of heaven in matters of such supreme importance? Nay, verily, brethren, God does not allow men to take the honor to themselves now, any more than He did when Aaron was made high priest; and the commission that should be insisted upon as essential, is the authority to preach, and that, too, not from a conference, or a body of elders, deacons, or officials, but from God Himself.

HIS QUALIFICATION AND PREPARATION

In the writer's thought of the preacher there is a difference between the qualification and the preparation. The qualification comes alone from God, who calls him to His work and gives to him that conviction of duty which gives power to the brain for thinking and to the body for doing. This is the life which comes from a close walk with God, an enduement of the Spirit, and a holy communion with the Infinite which prompts the God-called man to seek for spiritual things. To

develop the intellect and neglect the heart is to produce a one-sided character, wholly unqualified for life's best work, while the other extreme results in a zeal which is not always according to knowledge. Repairs to ceilings and windows often result from this sort of "sound preaching," rather than the leading of the soul to God. But as I make a distinction between qualification and preparation in the gospel ministry, it will be well for me to make plain the difference between the two, as I see it.

Here is a man who wants to be a soldier. He offers himself to his country. He is carefully examined and is not found wanting in any of the requirements of the army. He is of proper age and of correct height and weight. Lungs good, heart good, sight good, hearing good, all good. He volunteers; is sworn in; is dressed in the uniform of his country; is given a gun; is drilled and disciplined until he is familiar with all the varied and numerous movements of military tactics. See him stand erect with true soldiery bearing. Is he prepared for war? Yes. Is he qualified as a soldier? I do not know. Is he brave? Will he be loyal to his country? Has he true love of home in his heart? Will he obey the commands of his superior officer? Will he endure hardness? Will

he suffer, and if needs be, die for the dear old flag? If so, he is qualified to be a soldier, and with these qualifications he would slay more with the jawbone of an ass, than he could possibly do without them, even though he be panoplied with the king's armor, or fitted out with all the modern equipment for battle.

Here is a man who wants to preach. He offers himself to the Church and then to the conference. He is examined in language, in rhetoric, in logic, in psychology, in history, in science, in art, in literature, indeed he has the polish of the schools and the learning of the age. Is he prepared to preach? Yes. Is he qualified? I don't know. Has he been called of God? Has he listened to the still small voice, speaking to his soul of diviner things and holier living? Will he be true to God, the Church, his home, and himself? Will he preach the Word? Will he give diligence to present himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed? Will he endure hardness as a good soldier for Christ? Will he suffer and sacrifice? Has he character into which has been wrought the life of the Son of God? Has he tarried at Jerusalem until the Spirit came upon him? If so, he is qualified to preach, and will not fail of a hearing. But the qualified man who may

not be prepared will seek the needful preparation, and will not be content until he find it.

Ours is an age distinguished by intellectuality, with well-equipped schools and qualified teachers, and our pews are no longer filled with men and women whose educational opportunities were confined to a few months in log schoolhouses with incompetent instructors. There are no backwoods preachers. Indeed, civilization has obliterated the backwoods, and the world is living and moving in the light of the tireless sun of advancement, and the preacher must keep pace with the onward march, or fall before the trained intellect and cultured heart of a people who have been disciplined in schools and colleges under competent and thoroughly drilled teachers. This is an age of careful thinking, of extensive investigation, of deep probing, and persistent asking, until earth, sea, and sky are ransacked for their hidden treasures. Accuracy in speech, correction in diction, faultlessness in pronunciation, impressiveness in mannerism, and much more, are now required of the gospel minister, which even a few years ago were not only considered unnecessary, but wrong. But that age had its demands to which the ministry responded, which are not in existence to-day, but with their passing away have come others equally

important and much more exacting, and to which the present ministry must promptly respond. In this age of the world, no profession among men requires an intelligence and education so broad, so thorough, so deep, so full, as that of the Christian ministry. The minister who takes his rightful place and holds it must be able to cope with the living questions that stir and move the mind and thought of the day. There is no room in this age of literature, of mental energy, of mighty problems, for the public teacher who fails to apply himself to the tasks of his calling. The world has not stood still, nor is it standing still to-day, and the minister who comes to cultivate the moral fields with the old-time methods will find himself as far outgone as he who would if he should undertake to farm with the old-time wooden mold-board plow and the ground-hog thresher. All hail to the pioneer ministry of the Christian Church, both dead and living. They did their duty and they did it well, and upon their brows God puts a crown of honor and the people respond, Amen; but for their successors to go about their work in the same way is to invite defeat and suffer failure. The carefully prepared sermon was not then demanded, or even desired; and yet some of the sermons that have stood the severest literary

test, were written by our ministerial fathers, and shine as stars of the first magnitude in the literary and homiletic heavens of to-day. But in this age of active thought, and deep mental inquiry, with books, papers, and periodicals in every home, the minister dare not be indifferent to the careful study and thorough preparation of his sermon. The demand for a prepared ministry was not born in the nineteenth century. It was not legislated into existence by modern conferences, assemblies, or conventions. Indeed, their only work relative to a prepared ministry is to enforce the requirements of the divine law. Jesus trained His apostles for years before He laid upon them the responsibilities of the ministry, thus insisting that a preparation must precede operation. He knew that they could not turn from their fishing and their merchandising, and at will, according to their own ambition or fancy, preach the gospel successfully.

HIS PREPARATION

If by preparation is meant the things he must know and possess in order to preach, then the line of thought now under consideration will lead to the discussion of certain intellectual, literary, and social attainments indispensable to the man called of God to preach the gospel of His Son.

But if by preparation is meant his personal life as well—under the word preparation will be included all that otherwise would be said under the two, separately. One's preparation is determined most wholly, and in nearly every case by what one has to do.

The fisherman is prepared to fish when he has a line, hook, and some bait. He does not even need a pond into which to cast his line; and his entire tackle may belong to another, having been borrowed in a neighborly, honest way, or pirated without the owner's knowledge or consent; but no matter, so far as the preparation to fish is concerned, the man is prepared. Now, if such an one shall possess the spirit of the fisherman, and shall find a pond into which he may cast his line, it may be said of him that he is a fisherman. If his outfit should be a borrowed one, he will usually acknowledge the same, and return it to the owner with thanks after he has done with it.

What the preacher is to do, determines the kind and degree of his preparation. Fortunately we are not left to guess as to his line of service, for He who has called him to be a minister of His grace, has caused the lines of his activities to be very definitely announced.

He is to live a life.

He is to fight a battle.

He is to preach the gospel.

He is to exhort the wayward.

He is to rebuke the unruly.

He is to warn the wanderer.

He is to open the eyes of the blind.

He is to proclaim deliverance to the captive.

He is to heal the broken-hearted.

He is to open the prison doors to the captives.

In a word, he is to re-live the life of Jesus Christ on the earth. There can be no other plan or purpose for the life and activities of the Christian preacher. Now these being the things he has to do, what is the preparation needful?

I. A VITAL CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

This, you observe, touches the life of the man. It is not something to be attained, cultivated, or purchased; it is an experience in the soul of the power and life of Jesus Christ. To know God is not an intellectual conception, but a soul experience, and to represent him on the earth is not cutting intellectual gymnastics before an audience, but holding up the cross and inviting men to be cleansed in its blood.

Jesus said of Himself, that He was the "good Shepherd." The qualification certainly referred

to some life trait; some heart quality. He did not say, I am the good organizer, the good social caller, the good evangelist, the good mixer, He said, I am essentially good; good at heart; good in life; good in love; good in service; I am substantially, fundamentally good,—life quality; neither intellectual, literary, nor social attainments, but essential goodness. He mentions two characteristics of the good Shepherd. He says: "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep" and "I lay down my life for the sheep." Both of these Jesus did, and says to all His representatives on the earth, "Go and do thou likewise." The one needful preparation of the preacher at the very beginning of his ministry is to be good enough to be unselfish, a condition which is wholly unattainable, except through a vital touch with Jesus Christ.

The necessity for this vital Christian life will appear all the more important when you call to mind that the preacher cannot preach independently of himself. The scientist can teach science without any reference to moral character. The mechanic may teach his art most thoroughly, and at the same time be a moral degenerate; the teacher of art may impart his knowledge and train the student's hand to the skill of painting, while

at the same time his heart may be full of vile pictures painted on the foul canvas of a corrupt imagination; the college professor may direct the classes in his school in all the arts, sciences, philosophies, and intellectual exploits known to man, without having ever tasted of the sweets of redeeming grace. But not so with the preacher. He himself is essentially blended with the truth he teaches, and he cannot enforce it without a realization of it in his own life.

The preacher and the man must be one and the same personality; his sermon must be a transcript of his heart; then, and only then, will he be a chosen vessel of the Lord to bear the good news to a dying world. It is unreasonable and contrary to all human experience to suppose that any man could for any length of time inspire a love for the truth and a desire for holiness when he himself is a stranger to the one, and an opposer of the other. Under the Old Dispensation, no man with any bodily blemish was to offer the oblations to the Lord. The priest was to have his robes, bells, and pomegranates; the one a figure of sound doctrine, and the other of a fruitful life; and Jesus did not come to set aside the fundamentals of the priesthood, nor any other essential of the divine government, and hence the man who represents

Him on earth must be like Him, "a lamb without blemish." Mere orthodoxy will not save; a man and a minister may go to perdition with a catechism in one hand, and a confession of faith in the other. Mere intellectual assent to a truth will not answer; a man may go to ruin with the best written creed of Christendom in his pocket, and the latest revised edition of the discipline stored away in his hat.

The reason given for so many being added unto the Lord under the preaching of Barnabas was, "for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

II. A PREPARATION WHICH COMES THROUGH HIS OWN EFFORTS

Here we enter more concisely the realm of personal preparation. This preparation is none the less important because it is to be effected largely by the preacher's own efforts, for in the absence of the preparation now mentioned, he must live a bungler and die a failure, even though God gave him a call to work. When God calls men He calls them as they are at the time, but what they shall become is left largely with themselves. Peter was a fisherman, and Matthew a tax-gatherer when Jesus called them into His ministry, but He never intended for them to remain such. Peter was to

leave his fishing boat, and Matthew was to close up his office, and both were to become fishers of men.

This preparation includes his ability to stand erect, to walk gracefully, to ring the door-bell correctly, to bid the time of day pleasantly, to greet a parishioner mannerly, to read the Scriptures plainly, to eat becomingly, to leave a home properly, to tie his neckwear attractively, to shine his boots regularly, to shave his face or trim his beard tastefully and cleanly, to comb his hair daily, to keep his finger nails free from the accumulation of ages, and to do many another thing which common sense and propriety will suggest to him as the days of his service wear on.

But we must enter into that broader culture and keener intellectuality which this age, especially, demands of its preachers as an essential preparation for their life-work. It is true that among the ministers of the Christians were and are some of the most successful preachers that ever adorned, or ever will adorn, the pulpit who never enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate or theological training. They entered the ministry against "principalities and powers," and fought their way to high positions. Language cannot do them the honor they deserve. God bless the memory of

dead ones, and the services of living ones, and give them successors many times multiplied. The lives and services of such men demonstrate the fact that a preacher may be unable to read the classics, be wholly ignorant of higher mathematics, and still be, in the true sense of the word, an educated man—may know how to think, may be able to investigate closely, reason logically, and conclude correctly, may be indeed a good English scholar, and a man of extensive reading, yea, may be much more efficient as a preacher of the gospel than scores of others, who flaunt their sheep-skins, and tack up their diplomas from some of the highly honored institutions of the land. But because that is true, it emphasizes all the more the importance of an educated ministry. What the Church needs, ever has needed, and ever will need, is a ministry adapted to the culture of the age.

Society, like a pyramid, has the largest amount of material at the base. The Jews were unwise and unphilosophical when they asked as a test question, "Hath any of the rulers believed on him?" The common people heard Him gladly; they were the base of the pyramid, and the kindling at the base of the fire, and when kindled, the flame shot upward until such men as Paul were

enveloped and enlisted in service. Jesus Christ knew that religion develops upward, and not downward, and hence He went to the seashore for the first preachers of the gospel. But He wouldn't go there to-day. Ever since Christianity has been fully established, God has been asking for the Pauls, and using the Peters only when the Pauls were not responding.

It was Paul who said to his son in the gospel, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." No one for a moment can doubt that the ministry of this century would profit by that advice. Perhaps Paul would say now, were he to attend our conferences, "Young man, go to college. Go where men of learning, and teachers of culture are at the head of the classes, and where you may be taught the things a preacher should know and do." The minister who enters the sacred office now expecting to succeed simply because he feels called of God to preach, will find himself without a field or a friend within an incredibly short time. The world's culture demands of the Church a ministry equal to the culture found in the pew, and when the preacher is in any measure behind the times in manners, in intellectuality, in the necessary education and mental development, he will not be

long in finding out that he is stranded. No preacher can sustain himself who is not a student. He must be constantly accumulating fresh and invigorating thought, else he will soon exhaust the stock on hand, and find himself dead broke in a market where souls might be purchased for the Kingdom. The people will no longer listen to dry and senseless platitudes, nor will they, except under protest, pay for services which they have reason to believe cost the preacher neither time nor thought. The truth is, that a lazy preacher, one who will not study, and thus dishonors his Master, and bores his hearers, is a fraud, and deserves to be arraigned before the common court of the country for obtaining money under false pretense. Services in the pulpit which cost the preacher nothing, nothing in the way of preparation, hard study, and sermon-building, are worth nothing to his hearers, and the preacher who attempts to get his living that way is a thief and a robber, and to such the porter ought not to open.

It would be an untold calamity to the cause of Jesus Christ to have the pulpits of the Church occupied only by uncultivated men. On the contrary, nothing enhances the cause of Christianity more than to have its sacred platforms occupied

by men of vigorous intellect, or profound scholarship, and thorough cultivation—men fitted to rule by force of character, and weight of mind, while they constantly bow in deepest humiliation to the mind and heart of Jesus Christ. It is said that a certain king instructed his son in the art of governing men. “The great art,” said the king, “in governing men, is to make them believe that the king knows more than his subjects.” “But how,” asked his son, “shall he make them believe that he knows more?” “By knowing more,” said the king. The only way for a preacher to govern the people in matters of religion, and become a leader and a helper to the people, is by knowing more than they do.

Paul was a highly cultured man, preaching in Jerusalem, in the Hebrew language; in Rome, in the Latin language; in Athens, in the Greek language; and that, too, so logically and so eloquently, so correctly and forcefully that his learning astonished the profound and awed the ignorant. Now this thoroughly cultured man, this polished speaker, who knew the advantages of preparation, commanded Timothy to “give diligence to present himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” And he might have added, of whom the people will not

be ashamed. Also that he give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching; to give himself wholly to them. Thus the demand for an educated ministry which finds such prominent and pronounced expression in this age was laid by the authority of God and enforced in the example of Christ more than eighteen hundred years ago, and has been recognized and emphasized by the thoughtful, progressive men of each succeeding generation. Some of the old-time preachers, the fruit of whose labor is seen to-day, were ignorant men and seemed to dote on their ignorance, and thought that God held their illiteracy at a premium, but could they rise and speak to-day their united voice would be in favor of a prepared ministry. In our thought of the ministerial preparation we seem to reverse the divine order. Jesus put the preparation first and the qualification last. He fully intended that the story of His life should be perpetuated, and that, too, through thoroughly prepared men. His life's work was far too important to be entrusted to men, no matter how good, who were unprepared to properly handle it. He chose twelve men, and spared no pains in preparing them for the duties and responsibilities of the ministry. He gave them practical lessons in what to do, and how to do it. They listened to His ser-

mons; they heard Him tell His parables; they went with Him into the homes of the sick and the sorrowing; they watched Him in His daily associations with men; they witnessed His conduct in the presence of death; they felt the force of the divine presence and the thrill of that matchless voice; they journeyed with Him over hill and dale, and were shown, as no class in theology was ever shown, what to preach and how to preach it. Were they prepared? They certainly were. And now, said the Master, your preparation is complete, it only remains for you to tarry at Jerusalem until you are endued with the Spirit, which came upon them in such power as to make them mighty forces in the salvation of the world.

Rev. H. Y. Rush once said, at a session of the Miami Ohio Conference: "Christianity will stand the test of scholarship, of history, of exploration, of discovery, but it cannot live in an ignorant Church, nor survive an ignorant ministry." To be a minister of Jesus Christ means preparation, and it should. When you want a house built, whom do you employ? A prepared carpenter. When you want a school taught, who teaches it? The prepared teacher. When you want an engine run, whom do you engage to run it? The prepared engineer. When your child is sick and the

fever burns and scorches, and the chill shakes its little frame, and you moisten its parched lips, and tiptoe across the room, and speak in subdued tones, to what doctor do you entrust that little darling? Why, to the prepared doctor. When one is called to break to your souls the bread of life, and point out to you a higher and holier way, to lead your erring children back to the path of virtue and assist them in developing a character gemmed with life's virtues and molded into the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom do you call to do that important work? A prepared carpenter to build the house, a prepared teacher to teach the school, a prepared doctor to treat the child, a prepared blacksmith to shoe the horse, a prepared cook to cook the meals, a prepared engineer to run the engine, and a cheap and often unprepared preacher to do the most important work of all. But often times there is no other kind available.

THE MESSAGE AND ITS PREPARATION

There is little or nothing to say about the message, except that it must be biblical. Some insist upon doctrinal preaching; others upon the practical. Some clamor for the scientific, and others for the sympathetic, and still others would turn the pulpit into a sort of political, religious, scien-

tific, social, literary, and theatrical gymnasium, and open it alike to the discussion of all sorts of themes. Some say commerce, politics, newspapers, economics, novels, plays, current literature, theosophy, occultism, spiritualism, and Christian Science, are fit subjects for pulpit discussion. God never commissioned men to preach other than that which pertains to man's salvation from sin and his happiness in heaven. It may be freely admitted that ministers need to guard against taking too narrow a view of the scope of pulpit themes. When Paul said, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," he evidently did not mean that this literally should be his only and exclusive theme, for in his epistles he discusses many other subjects relating to matters of faith and duty. All questions of moral duty are fit topics for the pulpit. All themes, the discussion of which is in harmony with the mission of the Church and the work of the ministry, are proper subjects for the Christian preacher. The range of topics presented in the Scripture is by no means narrow; and a preacher may always feel that he is on safe ground when he is expounding and enforcing the truths taught in the Bible. He should exhort,

rebuke, condemn, encourage, and inspire with the truth of God.

But whatever his theme may be, whatever line of thought he may choose for his sermon, both himself and his sermon must be prepared, but especially himself.

The writer has heard preaching (so called) that was to the sermon what a load of lumber is to the building before the trained carpenter had measured and determined the various fittings of each particular piece. Material enough, to be sure, but all mixed up, and when the sermon (so called) was ended it resembled a house with the doors in the gables, the windows in the roof, and the floors on top, and the sleeping apartments in the cellar, and the parlor where the kitchen ought to be. A sermon, like a house, is to be erected, properly proportioned, and solidly put together. It is not a spontaneous growth, but the result of a workman whose knowledge of symmetry, strength, and beauty find expression in its construction. A sermon is the building; the text, the foundation; the material, Bible truths, historic incidents, and illustrative story; the tools, the minister's books, mind, and heart. There are lines to be drawn, mortises to be chiseled, tenons to be shaped, braces to be cut, joints to be fitted, and the meas-

uring to be so exact that when the building is raised each piece will so perfectly fit the place for which it was intended that it will be firmly bound together and at once present solidity, beauty, and proportion.

There is nothing more distasteful than an ill-shaped sermon, and nothing more likely to be displeasing to the congregation. If it is too narrow for its length, or too deep for its breadth, or too shallow for its width, it is likely to repel rather than attract the hearers. The sermon is an important thing, and the making of it is a large part of the preacher's work, which work is made all the easier by the preparation of which I have spoken. There are almost as many different ways of making sermons as there are men to make them. And a sermon is only well made when it includes and expresses the personality of the maker. Beecher could make his special preparation on Sunday morning; Finney could take a topic as the Church bells began to ring; Spurgeon could sometimes select a text after entering the pulpit; Craig could outline a sermon suggested by the song of a bird, as he stood upon the doorstep of the meeting-house, and all these could with thrilling effectiveness proclaim the gospel to both cultured and uncultured hearers; but these gen-

iuses are dead and their progeny is not large enough to fill the pulpits of the land.

The great thing in sermon-making is to get into usable shape the material that the general study and reading gives on the special theme or text chosen. Some can "think" sermonically only as they sit at their own study table with pen in hand. Another can get the "think" started and continued only by walking about his room. Some must literally take to the woods. Each one must study to find the most effective way for himself. In a general way, we can say: Take a text and think on it first of all. Get together what is in the library, or can easily be secured, on the theme or text. Read reflectively. Formulate the plan. Fill it in. Generally it can best be done by writing. It is truly wonderful how our long train of "ideas" gets down to a single small car, if a pen or pencil is used in going through to uncouple the empty cars. Before the writing there seems a lot of material and often is, but it is without form and void, and it is the preacher's work to shape the material into a sermon. Our sermons should show truth to the hearer. The aim in all sermons should be to interest, instruct, impart some appropriate spiritual truth. The character of the audi-

ence should always be kept in view. No unknown tongue should be indulged.

Every Church should be a people's Church, and every sermon a people's sermon. Especially is this applicable to large cities. It was the Church at Smyrna, Pergamos, etc.; not the emotional Church, the æsthetic Church, the philosophical Church. Churches should not be divided on such lines. The study of men's minds, with a view to reaching all, should be made. Great care should be taken not to get into a mold or "rut" in sermon-making. By study, to the same man will come ability to prepare emotional sermons, intellectual sermons, suggestive sermons, and exhaustive sermons. All these kinds should be delivered to congregations, no matter whether in town or country, among highly cultured people, or those not so highly favored. Whether to read from full manuscripts, memorize, have brief notes, or no notes, in the pulpit, is a matter for each one to decide upon.

However well the preacher may prepare his sermon, the most important thing is the preparation of himself. The problem in the preacher's study is mainly the making of the sermon, but the vitally important thing is the making of the preacher. Many preachers are sermon makers

and but little more. Sometimes I am almost tempted to advocate doing away with sermon making as a part of the preacher's business. When a man puts something he has manufactured in place of himself and at the expense of his own development, it may mean a good sermon, for the people, but it means death to the preacher. He has made something, but he may not have become something. Sermons as things separate and apart from their authors and of themselves can do nothing. When sermons are merely prepared and preached, the audience may get a sermon, but they do not get a preacher. No sermon can have power that does not flow from the preacher's personality. If the sermon maker shall have form and style and thought, and beauty, they will be found in the sermon. They will leap out of the maker's life into the thing he makes. The road to successful preaching is not so much in the making of the sermon as it is in the making of the preacher. Get the preacher made right and the sermon he makes will be made right. It will take shape and size and height and depth and breadth to the glory of God and the salvation of men.

Rev. David H. Bauslin, D. D., is the author of the following paragraph, which most clearly illustrates the fact set forth :

There may possibly be found ministers such as Elspeth McFadyan describes in Ian Maclaren's charming story as "Maister Popinjay," who is thus outlined "as neat an' fikey a little mannie as ever a' sair in a black goon. His bit sermon was six poems—five a' had heard afore—four anecdotes—three aboot himsel' and ain about a lord—twa burnies, ae floo'r gairden, and a snowstorm, wi' the text thirteen times and 'baloved twal.'"

Certainly in this there is a destitution of any sort of attraction for the robust piety and earnest inquiring of any high-souled man asking for the way of duty.

But turn from this to the young preacher of Drumtochty, drawn by the same master delineator. His mother, in the lingering moments just before her entrance into the city of God, had said to her boy: "If God calls ye to the ministry, ye'll no refuse, an' the first day ye preach in yir ain kirk, speak a gude word for Jesus Christ, an', John, I'll hear ye that day, though ye'll no see me, and I'll be satisfied."

Years passed and the boy's education was finished; a call was accepted, and the first sermon had been completed and was ready for delivery. "He had finished his last page," says the narrator, "with honest pride that afternoon, and had declaimed it facing the southern window, with a success that amazed himself. His hope was that he might be kept humble, and not be called to

Edinburgh for at least two years; and now he lifted the sheets with fear. The brilliant opening, with its historical parallel, the review of modern thought, reinforced by telling quotations, that trenchant criticism of old-fashioned views would not deliver. His imaginary audience now had vanished, and in its place there came the vision of the sweet face, ever the fact of his vanished but translated mother," and "then in the stillness of the room he heard a voice, 'Speak a gude word for Jesus Christ.'" The next minute John was kneeling on the hearth, pressing the sermon, which was intended to shake Drumtochty, into the red fire. The last of his labored discourse which he saw in this the hour of his sacrifice and triumph was something about the "Semitic Environment." "As the last black flake fluttered out of sight, the face looked at him again, but this time the sweet brown eyes were full of peace." The next day John went to his pulpit resplendent with gown and bands, without his alleged learning about the "Semetic Environment," 'tis true, but with a real message from God. His "gude word for Jesus" found the hearts of Drumtochty, and Donald Menzies was heard to exclaim, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." Genuine, heartfelt, earnest "gude words for Jesus Christ," such as

bring men face to face with God; such as always grapple with the individual conscience and summon the soul to bow to the moral judgment which it passes upon itself, are not only the great urgency of our times, and of all times, but likewise the ample reward of the man who bears them unto the people.

But there is another phase of ministerial preparation that must not be overlooked. It is one, however, that is most seriously overlooked, the result of which is harm and only harm continually. It is a physical preparation. This physical preparation includes the style of dress, cut of whiskers, color of tie, and a hundred other little matters that go to make up the minister's preparation. It also includes the handling of his feet, the movement of his body, the raising of his hands, the erect posture and graceful movement. Many a thoughtful, earnest sermon has come short of its purpose because the preacher failed to comb his hair or black his boots, or during his delivery lounged upon the Bible-stand, or stormed about on the platform.

No man called of God to preach the gospel can afford to be negligent of his personal appearance. John dressed in the wilderness in keeping with the custom of his class, and set an inflexible rule

for the gospel minister, the violation of which means only harm to the cause. The camel's hair coat is as inappropriate to this age as the broad-cloth would have been in John's. The little niceties required of the minister in his physical preparation are not to be overlooked nor undervalued, for they mean much; for audiences have eyes as well as ears. In this physical preparation may be included the voice. Some preachers have a "preacher's voice." Indeed, some have two voices, one for preaching and one for conversation, and of all things this is the most repulsive, and from affectation, good Lord, deliver us. Very few preachers have what the preacher really needs and in many cases needs most of all—a suitable voice for public speaking. The ear-splitting sermons to which some audiences are compelled to listen are enough to discourage even the most pious of us all. Whatever voice the preacher may have, whether it be a manufactured voice, a natural voice, a Sunday voice, a preacher's voice, or just a common ordinary one, it should be the one he ever uses. He should talk in it, read in it, joke in it, sing in it, preach in it, shout in it, whisper in it, scold in it, pray in it, and think in it. Yes, one can think in it as easily as one can speak in it when once one knows how. The preacher

should get acquainted with his voice, should listen to it, and make it behave itself. The roof-lifting tones of the early days are not needed now, and we poor fellows that were made to believe in our first preaching that the loud tone was the chief virtue of our preaching, have found it out by the scowls and frowns of the people who would teach us better did they but have the chance. Nathan Shepherd, in his book entitled, "Before An Audience," has this to say about the voice:

The public speaker has no use for the physiology of the voice. It is quite immaterial to him whether his voice is produced by the larynx or the calf of the leg. It is not of the slightest assistance to him to be informed that "nasality is produced by the lowering of the velum on one side and the lifting of the base of the tongue on the other." He will get rid of his nasality, not by talking about it, but by talking without it. The only way to avoid it is—to avoid it. No drunkard was ever reformed by a diagnosis of delirium tremens. If there is no will of his own to appeal to, no appeal will be of any avail. You may make him weep, but you cannot make him act. You cannot reach a bad habit unless you set the will against it. A bad voice is a bad habit, to be got rid of just as any other bad habit is to be got rid of, by turning the will upon it; a good voice is a good habit to be acquired, just as any other good habit is to be acquired, by setting the will to acquire it. If your voice has a tendency to go up, you are to do with it just as you should do with your elbow if it has a tendency to go up at the table—put it down and keep it down by an exercise of the will. Will it down, and put it down, and keep it down until it stays down without a conscious exercise of the will.

He who is unconcerned about his preparation for preaching the gospel must be destitute of all evidence that God has called him to preach. Not that a preparation cannot be made outside of college walls, however advantageous a collegiate education may be, but that a preparation can and will be made by him whom God hath called to "preach the Word." For it is impossible to conceive that God is pleased, and that He will own and bless the man as a preacher of righteousness, who is unprepared and unconcerned as to a preparation for such services. Yet, I have seen men assuming to be preachers whose only ambition seemed to be to edge their way into the pulpit and thereby advertise themselves as preachers of the Word of God. Let me say that the day has passed when the people will tolerate such an imposition. For with the advantages of this age of books, cheap as they are, and with the helps furnished for the study of the Bible, any man of talent, if he has purpose and energy, may make a commendable preparation for the work of the ministry. And he that is too indolent and lazy to "give diligence to present himself a workman approved unto God, handling aright the word of truth," will not, and should not, be respected as a preacher of the gospel by any intelligent people. Think not, my brother, to say that you have not time for

this preparation. You haven't time for anything else. And time taken by the God-called man for any other purpose than that which is legitimately connected with his work does himself a wrong, and the cause he represents an inseparable injustice. Besides, it requires but a small portion of our time as evidenced in the fact that the most stupendous literary works have been wrought out in the spare moments of the day. Hale wrote his contemplations while riding from place to place and staying at the homes on his circuit. Dr. Mason Good made a noted translation of the Scriptures while riding in his carriage from door to door. One of the chancellors of France wrote a bulky volume in the successive intervals of daily waiting for dinner. Doddridge wrote his expositions chiefly before breakfast. Kirk White studied Greek, going over the nouns and verbs while on his way to and from a lawyer's office. Burney learned French and Italian while riding on horseback. Franklin laid his stock of knowledge in his dinner hours and evenings while working as a printer boy. Dr. Barnes wrote his "Notes" between four and nine o'clock, a. m., during all the years of which he had on his heart and in his hands all the responsibilities and labor of a large pastorate. Edison, the world's most famous electrician, sold peanuts on railroad trains

and studied electricity while waiting at stations for his train to go. It is not a question of time. It is a question of will. The man who earnestly desires a preparation will find time and opportunity to secure it. But even if it requires much time and strength, it should be done, yea, it must be done. Pick out any one hundred names that to-day stand inscribed upon the roll of fame, high up amid the national glories, intellectual grandeurs, and ministerial honors, and I will show you one hundred hearts that braved the storms and ceaselessly labored for a purpose. "For forty years," said Thomas Jefferson, "the rising sun has not found me in bed."

The heights of great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

In this general preparation a certain amount of reading and a certain kind of reading is absolutely necessary and without it no man is prepared to stand the test of this age. For general reading and study I name the Bible first, of course. It is the minister's specialty, his text-book and basis for the truth he preaches. This does not necessarily mean that only texts should be quoted to the hearers. The Bible is suggestive along the lines of every truth helpful to man in every age. Next

I briefly mention good commentaries, theology, and Church doctrines. Theology should be studied but not preached—Christian evidences, Jewish manners, laws, customs, Palestinian geography, principles of other religions—Church history, philosophy, science, art, music, general history, standard prose, and poetical literature—news-papers, magazines, religious papers, other high-class papers—novels. The preacher should take the time to read high-class novels occasionally. It is ever the same gospel but not the same stereotyped presentation of it. Even the Lord's Prayer is not identically reported by the evangelists. Paul had the same gospel in the synagogue as on Mars' hill, but his synagogue sermon was not the same as his Mars' hill one. It used to be more common than now to say that the apostles and prophets were not educated, but have we not read of the "schools of the prophets" in Elijah's day? Is not Christ called the Great Teacher? Did He not insist on a three years' course and then the diploma of the Holy Ghost? And the world's culture then was not a tithe of what it is to-day. If on earth now, I think the Master would give at least a twelve-year course, and even more for some of us.

Even though I had the time to write and you the patience to read, this subject would remain too

high, and deep, and broad, and grand, and important for our comprehension. The preacher is called of God to preach the gladdest news to which human ears ever listened; he is to tell the sweetest story to which human minds and hearts have ever given attention; he is to repeat the mightiest truths which ever stirred human intellect or impressed human souls; he is to lead men to the highest and holiest life ever revealed to man; he is to comfort the sorrowing with a comfort not his own; he is to put into human life the glad news that Jesus Christ is the sinners' friend; he is to point the erring to the strait and narrow way, tell the sinner of a Savior, the lost of a Redeemer, the penitent of a full and free pardon, the sick of the Heavenly Physician, the dying of a home wherein dwelleth only purity whose glories outshine the sun by day and the moon by night; he is commissioned of the Most High God to preach the gospel to every creature, to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; he is anointed to preach the gospel to the poor; he is sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them

that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

HIS DEPENDENCE AND HIS INDEPENDENCE

As paradoxical as it may seem the preacher is at one and the same time dependent and independent. In the commission and authority given to the Twelve we find their work outlined, their dependence and their independence established and announced.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and charged them saying, Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely ye received, freely give. Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food. And into whatsoever city or village ye shall enter, search out who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go forth. And as ye enter into the house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Of all men the minister of Jesus Christ is the most dependent and the most independent. Jesus told the disciples how to treat the cities that

received them kindly and how to treat the ones that rejected them, in which is shown how absolutely dependent they were to be, and at the same time how absolutely independent they were to be. They were to go on foot into strange countries; they were to make no provisions whatever for their comforts or even necessities, but depend wholly upon the hospitality of the people to whom they ministered. They were to take no silver, nor gold, nor brass, nor wallet, nor coat, nor staff, but go empty handed and alone into the homes of the people and depend upon them for their daily bread. But at the same time He told them that if the people did not treat them as men of such high rank and having such a great mission should be treated to shake the dust from their feet in testimony against them. Jesus would have them know and appreciate their exalted mission, and dignity of character. It seems that He would say to them, you are of too much value, and your mission is too important for you to spend any time with a quibbling, fault-finding, grumbling people; just get out of their city and as quickly as possible. When I was pastor I think I loved my people as tenderly as a man with no more heart than I, could love a people, and they have loved me, for which I have many times thanked

God and promised Him the best of my life for the people He had given me; and yet there never was a time in my life when I did not feel wholly independent of the people I served. And now if I felt competent to give advice to the younger ministers, it would be to cultivate a feeling of dependence upon your people. Depend upon them for your living, your standing in the community, your efficiency, for the full measure of their confidence and the depth of their sympathy and my word for it you will not be disappointed. And at the same time cultivate a feeling of independence. Do not become the slave of any man or of any Church. Call no man master for one is your Master, even Christ. Be free to speak the truth in love. Always express your own convictions of duty. Let the people feel that you are sent of God as well as called of Him. Never pander to a sickly sentimentality, but be free and independent as was your Master.

To the preacher is promised two things: Christ's presence and a necessary compensation. Christ said, Go and preach, and lo I am with you. That is compensation enough aside from the material things necessary to sustain life. It is helpful to have the sympathy and good-will of the people, and to feel that they appreciate you,

and to feel that Christ is with you, But the same Christ who said, "Lo I am with you," also said, "The laborer is worthy of his food." The law of compensation is universal, and inflexible. The God who said the ox that treaded out the corn should not be muzzled, also said that the preacher who faithfully preaches the gospel of *His Son* shall not go without pay. We accept the service of the teacher, the doctor, the lawyer, the clerk, the carpenter, and compensate them accordingly; but we forget that Paul expressly declares that "Even so did the Lord ordain, that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." The word ordain as Paul used it, means to arrange throughout. So that God has arranged, that throughout the man's ministry he should live of it. It was a maxim among the Jews that the inhabitants of a town where a wise man had made his abode, should support him: because he had forsaken the world and its pleasures to study those things by which he might please God and be useful to men.

Dr. Barnes, in commenting on 1 Cor. 9:14, "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel," says:

(1) That the command is they shall "live of the gospel." It is not they should grow rich, or lay up treasures, or speculate in it, or become merchants, farmers, teachers, or

book-makers for a living; but it is that they should have such a maintenance as to constitute a livelihood. They should be made comfortable; not rich. They should receive so much as to keep their minds from being harassed with cares, and their families from want; not so much as to lead them to forget their dependence on God, or on the people. Probably the true rule is that they should be able to live as the mass of people among whom they labor, that they should be able to receive and entertain the poor, and be willing to do it; and as that the rich also may not despise them, or turn away from their dwellings. (2) This is a command of the Lord Jesus; and if it is a command, it should be obeyed as much as any other law of the Redeemer. And if this is a command, then the minister is entitled to a support; and then also a people are not at liberty to withhold it. Further, there are as strong reasons why they should support him, as there are why they should pay a school-master, a lawyer, a physician, or a day laborer. The ministers usually toil as hard as others; expend as much in preparing for his work; and do as much good; and there is even a higher claim in this case. God has given an express command in this case and He has not in others. (3) The salary of a minister should not be regarded as a gift merely, any more than the pay of a congressman, a physician, or a lawyer. He has to claim it; and God has commanded it should be paid. It is, moreover, a matter of stipulation and compact, by which a people agree to compensate him for service. And yet, is there anything in the shape of debt where there is so much looseness as in regard to this subject? Are men usually as conscientious in this as they are in paying a physician or merchant? Are not ministers often in distress for that which has been promised them, and which they have a right to expect? And is not their usefulness, and the happiness of the people, and the honor of religion intimately connected with obeying the rule of the Lord Jesus in this respect?

One of my good friends, once said to me, "I have just given five dollars toward your support." I

said to him, that I was not aware that I had become helpless or indigent. I said, "Look at these hands, and feet, and arms, and eyes, and tell me if you think I am not able to support myself." Said I, "You support criminals, and paupers, but you compensate labor." A minister is a laborer, and is worthy of his hire. Aside from the salvation of souls, the community gets the benefit of the preacher's brains, scholarship, and service, and he should be paid, not supported. A wild cry rends the air. A child has fallen into the water and is drowning! We see its white face as it lies there in a background of death! A little hand is thrust above the wave in a frantic endeavor to find help. A man rushes in at the risk of his own life, and rescues the child from a watery grave. It proves to be your child! He brings your child back to you for which he offered the price of his own life. You undertake to compensate him for it. Where would you begin? What would be the first amount offered for such service? The child, handed back to your arms snatched from the sea, grows to a beautiful young manhood or womanhood. It is seized with a dreaded disease which threatens its life. The fever burns and scorches the child, and shakes the fair, young frame. The old family physician is

called in, who with brain, and heart, and skill, and love goes to work to stay the awful ravages of death. He succeeds. He cools the fever, he arrests the chill, he stays the disease, he pushes back the death, and saves your child! Back from the shadow of the grave he comes bearing it triumphantly, and placing it in your arms he takes his departure. Some time afterwards you go into his office and propose to pay him for saving your child! What would be your first payment? Would all your money, all your farm, all your bank stock, all your notes, all your mortgages, in any sense represent the love you have for the child or your appreciation of the work done by the physician? Later on the same child loses it way and strays out into the paths of wrong. Its soul is sick and in a sea of sin, away from home, from God, and the good. That once pure life so white and stainless, is outlined in the red flames of an awful hell. The minister of the parish finds it so, and leads it to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and the soul is washed in the blood of the Christ and cleansed and saved. Peans of praise, and loud hallelujahs go up to God amid which the angels lift their voices in thanksgiving for a soul that was lost and is found. Where will you find money enough to compensate

a man for such work as that? And yet there are people by the score and multitude who think that if they give a dollar a year to the "support of their preacher" they are doing well. Such people have not the slightest conception of the value of the Christian ministry. Ministers are not to be supported, they are to be paid. They can support themselves. They can support themselves, by farming, by carpentering, by teaching school, by selling goods, or in many other ways not necessary to mention, but if they preach the gospel they are to live of the gospel, and they who hear it and fail to contribute toward the compensation of the preacher will die hopelessly in debt and the collecting be done in the next world.

Compensating the minister for his service is in no sense paying for the gospel; that is without money and without price. We pay for the book in which the gospel is written; we pay for the building in which it is preached and we pay the minister who preaches it to us, in the same sense that we pay for the window through which the light comes into our houses, or for the spouts that carry the water from the roofs of them into the cistern which holds it, and, and for which we also pay, but we do not pay for the light, nor for the water. The gospel itself is as free as the light or

the rain. When we get the gospel we do not pay for what we get any more than we pay for the rain that falls, the dew that gathers, or the air that circulates about us. We pay for the means of getting them, and the man in any community who will not share with his neighbors in getting the gospel into the community ought also to ask them to construct his windows, spout his roof, and build his cistern. The last would be as consistent and as honorable as the first.

HINTS, SUGGESTIONS, ILLUSTRATIONS

The preacher should be industrious, honest, and economical. A lazy preacher is a nuisance, a dishonest preacher, a criminal, and a spendthrift, a disgrace.

He should dress well for his public service. A lady parishioner of mine once said to her husband who was a member of the pastoral committee, "Well, do get a preacher that we are not ashamed to look at."

The sermons should be Scriptural. To be "mighty in the scriptures" should be the aim of every minister who speaks to the souls of men. Jesus Christ went into the synagogue and stood up to read.

Always seize the main point of the text and press it home. Martin Luther likens those who

wander from their texts to a maid going to market, who wastes her time in talking with this one and that one on the road, and then arrives too late. Digressions often weaken the impression of a good sermon.

“Just put a little common sense into your sermons,” said an old Oxford professor to a “clever” young preacher. The common people heard Christ gladly because He was always understood by the people, although there are a great many “uncommon” people who are pleased with learned or eloquent sermons which they do not comprehend. We have all heard of the old woman who went to Church because she was so charmed with that beautiful word Mesopotamia, but it did not do her much good.

Always know when to stop. This is the sixth of Luther’s nine qualities of a good preacher. Boyle has an excellent essay on “Patience Under Long Preaching.” The advice is good, but the definition is too difficult. What is a long sermon? Nowadays ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, especially those designated “High Church men,” usually keep within twenty minutes; but it is often difficult to preach a really good sermon within such limits. George Herbert, in his “Country Parson” advocates the use of a short

sermon. He says: "The parson exceeds not an hour in preaching, because all ages have taught that a competence." William Jay, of Bath, who was a popular Congregational preacher in his day, says: "I saw one excellency was within my reach, and it was brevity; and I determined to obtain it. I never exceed three-quarters of an hour at most." But both George Herbert and William Jay belonged to a generation that is gone.

"Nothing," says Lamont, "can justify a long sermon. If it be a good one it need not be long; and if it be a bad one, it ought not be long."

A Scotch preacher had preached his audience out of the Church. When one of the weary ones asked another if the sermon was done yet, the reply was, "His tow's dune lang syne; but he's spinnin' awa' yet."

A quaint writer has said, "A preacher should begin low, proceed slow, rise higher, and catch fire." The writer used to keep that saying lying on the open Bible before him when he preached.

On a rainy Sunday do your best. Never weary the people who do come, with scoldings intended for those who have stayed away. Reserve that for the people who need it. If you have a good sermon, give it to those who have been to some trouble to attend the service.

Be sure you have something to say before you open your mouth. A preacher once declared that all he had to do was to open his mouth and the Lord filled it. "Yes," said a good old woman, "that He will—with wind." It is said in the early day of Methodism that the young preachers were not permitted to write their sermons. One young man feeling very deeply the need of a better preparation, would clandestinely write his sermons. It is told that one day while this young man was deeply engrossed in his secret task that the presiding elder came upon him unawares and severely chastised him for so doing, saying, "While you write the devil looks over your shoulder and knows what you are going to say and tells it to your congregation before you can. "Now," said he, "I do not write a word of my sermons, and when I get up to preach the devil himself does not know what I will say."

Make sure of your calling. Do not mistake the letters, P. C., seen in the vision of the night. They may not mean preach Christ, but plow corn, and it is more pleasing to God, and far more acceptable to the people, for some men to preach Christ by plowing corn than by any other way open to them.

The preacher should make his sermons worth his salary. An Indian, being asked what he did for a living, replied, "Oh! me preach." "Preach!" said a bystander; "what do you get paid for preaching?" "Sometimes me get shillin', sometime two shillin'." "Isn't that mighty poor pay?" "Oh, yes, and it's mighty poor preach!"

The preaching may be scholarly, but should be experimental. Henry Ward Beecher was fond of saying: "There is no such preaching as the experience which a man gives who has just realized the sinfulness of his soul. I have often heard myself out-preached by some new convert who could hardly put words together."

Some say experimental preaching is shallow. Shallow—is deep as the soul of God!

The hearers should always be made to feel the power of the message. It is said that a man who was fond of hearing both Beecher and Spurgeon was asked to name the difference, as he saw it, between the two men. "Well," said he, "when I hear Mr. Beecher I say, 'What a great preacher he is!' and when I hear Mr. Spurgeon, I say, 'What a great sinner I am!'" Dr. Hickington, chaplain to Charles II., used to preach at the king's vice. This the king took to himself; and so one day he said: "Doctor, you and I ought to be better

friends; give up being so sharp on me, and see if I don't mend on your hand." "Well, well," quoth the doctor, "I'll make it up with your majesty on these terms: as you mend I'll mend."

The preacher should be a man of fervent prayer, and his sermons should be steeped in petition. Flavel says, "There was a husbandman that always sowed good seed, but never had corn. At last a neighbor came to him, and said, 'I will tell you what probably may be the cause of it. It may be that you do not steep your seed.' 'No, truly,' replied the other, 'nor did I ever hear that seed must be steeped.' 'Yes, surely,' said his neighbor; 'and I will tell you how; it must be steeped in prayer.' When the party heard this he thanked him for his counsel, reformed his faults, and had as good corn as other persons."

The preacher should simply do his best. There can be no rule. A preacher that is always "calling" may be a nuisance and need "calling down." A preacher that never calls, needs "calling out." But no set of rules has ever yet worked successfully in all cases. A pastor, the preacher should be, and as such should feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer. A good old deacon in one of the writer's first charges always referred to him as his "pasture," not an

unappropriate reference, provided the preacher had something for his sheep to eat.

In his public address he should be careful of his gestures. It is of no use to pound the Bible. A Bible-smasher in the pulpit is in the wrong place. It avails nothing to walk from side to side of the platform. The days of the traveling preachers are past and it is perfectly proper for one to stand still while preaching, providing he does not become a post. An old colored man who was always present at the service when a certain man preached, was asked by the preacher what it was in his sermons that attracted him to come, when he never came on any other occasion. "Oh, nothin', sir. Nothin', sir." "Then why do you come?" "Oh, I like to see you fling your arms around, it kinder 'muses me."

He should not make himself a nuisance in the homes of his people. Be friendly and even familiar, but do not be a burden or suppose that it is no trouble to them to care for you. The home is a sacred place, and it has its duties, its obligations, and its rights, and upon them even a preacher has no right to intrude. A hotel bill once in a while will not weaken the preacher's influence with his parishioners.

The preacher should be prompt in commencing the public service. Of all the bad habits into which a preacher may fall, that of "waiting" is the worst. No preacher has any moral right to take my time to give to another. Ten thirty a. m. should mean ten thirty a. m., and not ten thirty-one a. m. Some one has said that there are three hands: the right hand, the left hand, and the "little behind hand." Schools open and close according to the time announced; so do banks and stores; and the preacher who suffers himself to wait for people, or for any other reason allows the service to be delayed, ought, in justice to the cause, resign the ministry and accept a position in which prevaricating would not be so grievous.

The preacher should not allow himself to be buttonholed by every one. A little self-respect will often save him annoyance from bores.

The preacher should not be on the lookout for injuries or snubs. Preachers who go about hunting trouble soon find trouble hunting them.

SENSATIONAL PREACHING

To understand sensational preaching, it is necessary that we understand preaching as defined in the Bible.

To preach means the following things:

1. *To Bring or Tell Good Tidings.* (Isaiah 61: 1)

This Jesus applied to Himself, and thus becomes the preacher whose life we should live, and whose preaching we should copy.

2. *To Call or Proclaim a Given Message.* (Jonah 3: 2)

3. *To Tell or Announce Thoroughly.* (Luke 9: 60)

4. *To Speak Throughout—That Is, It Is to Absorb the Preacher.* (Acts 20: 7)

5. *To Tell the Good News or Tidings.* (Luke 3: 18; 4: 43; Acts 8: 35)

6. *To Tell Thoroughly.* (Acts 4: 2; 13: 38; 1 Cor. 9: 14; Col. 1: 28)

7. *To Cry or Proclaim as a Herald.* (Matt. 3: 1; 4: 17; 10: 7; 10: 27)

8. *To Talk or Discourse.* (Mark 2: 2)

A PREACHER IS—

1. *A Caller, A Congregator.* (Ecclesiastes 12: 9, 10)
2. *A Crier, or Proclaimer.* (1 Tim. 2: 7; 2 Tim. 1: 11)
3. *To Proclaim as a Herald.* (Rom. 10: 14)

These references are quite sufficient to define for us the fact of preaching; the plan of preaching; the purpose of preaching, and the theme of the sermon.

Let us now give attention to

SENSATIONAL PREACHING

Let us not overlook some facts. Every sermon produces a sensation. It may be, and often is, a sensation of drowsiness, or it may be the sensation of being lifted into a higher and holier spiritual atmosphere. There is a sensationalism which is unbiblical, degrading to the ministry, and injurious to the people. There is to-day in many churches, and especially during evangelistic services, a mawkish, overdone, spectacular sensationalism, which should have no place in the house of God, and can have no part in the saving of souls. To make a stir simply to keep things stirred, does nobody any good, and often results in great harm to a large number of people.

A thousand censures upon the man, who, while wearing a clerical coat acts the clown and degrades the sacred office by unholy speech. But there is a just difference between, and a just distinction to be made between that sort of artificial striving to "get up" a sensation, and that sort of spiritual stir which comes from an earnest pulpit appeal, and which profoundly moves the feeling of the people. But when preachers think more of effect than of exactness in statements; when the sacred associations of religion are cheapened by trivial and catchy themes; when, instead of preaching upon repentance, the preacher conceals that great theme in a boisterous, flippant tirade upon the Rottenest Man in the Rottenest City, then it is time to return to the old paths and inquire more perfectly the way of the Lord. Let it be understood by every preacher that anything and everything done in the pulpit which calls attention to the preacher, detracts just that much from the message.

Sensational preaching may be classified as follows:

1. *Advertising, Absurd, and "Catchy" Subjects.*

To announce a subject beforehand may be both wise and right, and in many instances commend-

able and helpful, but distinction should be made between attractive subjects and the grotesque and spicy kind. Let a preacher announce that he is going to discuss Repentance, The New Birth, or any other distinctively Biblical subject, and the worldly-minded take due notice thereof and stay at home. But let him announce that he will preach on "How to Fatten an Oyster," or "The Search-light Turned on the Last Election," or "The Latest Social Scandal," and the multitudes will fill his temple. In this connection it should be stated that oftentimes such methods violate good taste and become offensive to the esthetic sense, as for instance a preacher announced that he would perform in the pulpit the famous handcuff act in real expert burglar style. A certain evangelist announced that his subject was "Hen," and took his text from the passionate cry of our Lord when he wept over Jerusalem. In our National Capital a would-be popular preacher took for his subjects on Sunday evening, "Do Washington Women Flirt?" "Have Washington Men and Women Quit Blushing?" "A Virginia Lover's Shot-gun." Let me say that even though such topics draw crowds for a while, a heavy price must be paid in ministerial dignity and church character for the crowds they draw. It may be said by some that preachers do not discuss these subjects even

though they announce them, but present some gospel theme under these catchy captions. If that be so, then the preacher has *schemed*, and *tricked* the people into coming, and even fair-minded worldly men would condemn such sculduggery as belittling, dishonest, untruthful, and full of wickedness. The preacher who, for the sake of getting a hearing, announces that he will preach on "How Jonah Lost His Umbrella," and then discusses another subject under that caption, is not in the youthful George Washington class. Such a preacher may deliver ever so helpful a message, and by it some may be led to a better life, but it yet remains true that the people came under false pretenses, and were tricked into attendance. But the harm is not found alone in the trick, the falsehood, and the loss of dignity, it demands of the preacher a steady decline from the high and lofty themes of the gospel, to the catchpenny methods of the fakir. A preacher who had resorted to this sensational topic method finding his crowd leaving him, and the self-respecting people of the community turning against him, went so far in his downward course to announce as his theme for a certain Sunday evening, "Four Kisses at the Baptist Church by the Pastor." Such sensationalism is a shame to the high calling of the gospel minis-

ter, and should be put out of the synagogue with a scourge.

2. *Another Form of Sensationalism Is Ludicrous Pulpit Methods.*

I do not mean by these the Jumping Jack, nor the clown method, nor any other boorish, capering, prancing way. Sometimes the pulpit is an opportunity for queer antics, oddity of manner, course jokes, and rude witticism, but I do not mean these. There is a real place for humor in the pulpit, as I shall show later on, but the pulpit clown, and clerical montebank do vastly more harm than good, even though they preach the gospel. But what I mean is the way some modern preachers decorate their pulpits. Some years ago a preacher was to have the barbers of the city present on a certain occasion. To show them how up-to-date he was he had his pulpit decorated with barber chairs, razors, cups, etc., in short, he stood in a barber shop, the laughing stock of the men he sought to entertain. They knew more about barber shops than he did, and spent six days in the week in them, and now this up-to-date preacher feasted their eyes upon them on the seventh. Following this method, wash-tubs and clothes-lines should form the background of the pulpit when preaching to laundrymen. A stable and another

donkey on the platform would look well, should horse dealers be invited to attend in a body. A preacher called of God to warn men of death, hell, and the judgment resorting to such methods calls for no uncertain condemnation from those who have followed their Master's way of proclaiming the "Good News." The tendency is from bad to worse until the church becomes a playhouse, and entertainment is substituted for worship.

3. Another Form of Sensationalism Is the Assaulting of Fundamental Truth.

Sensational preachers often really assault the evils of the day, and they should be commended for it, but more often than we know in these latter days, the real foundations of the church are being assaulted. The advocacy of modern times, modern methods, modern service, modern everything is a form of sensationalism which may in the end, to say the least, destroy the faith of some and strew the highway of life with wreck and ruin. The miraculous, the supernatural, the spiritual, the almost everything that was once accepted as sacred truth is now being held up to ridicule, criticism, and condemnation. It is indeed time for faithful men to stand guard at the door of the sanctuary, and demand of every man who would

be a shepherd in Israel to give proof of his ministry.

In this age when sensationalism is prominent everywhere; when nerves are strung to the highest tension; when life is one unbroken round of change and excitement, there is greater need than ever before for a message in direct contrast to the daily temper, experience, and grind; a message of love direct from God, and such a message can only be found where Spurgeon found it; where Finney found it; where Whitfield found it; where Moody found it; where many preachers and evangelists are finding it to-day; a message of strength and peace in the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

BUT THERE IS A FORM OF SENSATIONALISM THAT
SHOULD NOT BE CONDEMNED

A single illustration of this statement will suffice. In the days of Henry Ward Beecher's popularity, a gentleman of rare taste and great ability, and who was averse to all manner of sensationalism, attended his service for the first and only time. He says, "I do not remember his text, but I do vividly remember several of his dramatic periods. In the course of his sermon he used the expression, 'Grinding out propositional dogmas,' and as he was uttering the words he stepped to the right side of the little desk and went through

the motions of turning an imaginary crank, as though he were grinding something, and then many in the audience laughed. I should not have been able to remember that phrase so long if it had not been for the dramatic illustration. It made," said this gentleman, "an indelible impression." This same man tells that in the same sermon in speaking of the element of mercy in true justice, the preacher illustrated his thought by saying that when he was a lad, and was in a dirty and disordered condition one day, his sister took him in hand and put him in good order and appearance again. He said his sister was "seeking for traces of beauty" in him, and then with a twinkle in his eye he ran his right hand through his hair and said, "I hope she found them." "Had it not been," said the gentleman, "for that dramatic action, I would not have continued to this day to remember both the words and the point he was making." In this dramatic realm some men are master hands, others can do nothing and it is unwise for them to try. It would not be advisable for all preachers to try to be humorists in the pulpit, for they might succeed.

This element so valuable in Henry Ward Beecher was not only dramatic, it was humorous, and the preacher who possesses real humor seldom

fails to interest, instruct, inspire, and help his hearers. No man can tell what it is; it has never yet been analyzed; try to mold it into a definition and it rebels and runs away; try to force it into a contrast and it disappears. Humor is not buffoonery; it is pathos; it is sympathy; it is optimism; it is soul bubbling over with fellowship. We have two great American citizens, the very names of whom stir every heart to its depth—Washington, Lincoln. Washington's character, heroism, and attainments, demand loyalty and love, and yet honest old Abe, with his smiling face and twinkling eye enframed in lines of serious anxiety wins our love, our admiration, and our loyalty in a way that Washington is powerless to command. Washington, we are told, was deficient in humor, but Lincoln could not make a gesture, open his mouth, cross his legs, or say "That reminds me," without opening up the fountain of humor that bubbled in his heart. Humor, like the watering-cart on a city street, lays the dust, cools the atmosphere, and leaves all happier than it found them, and which will be remembered for many a grateful moment after the cart itself has been lost to sight and sound around the corner. Do not confound humor with sensationalism, nor with antic cutting in the pulpit. It is none of these,

nor is it like them. They are of their father, the devil; humor is heaven born and heaven bred, for God Himself shall laugh at the desolation of the wicked. Kindred to these elements of pulpit power, and far, too, from sensationalism, is that of surprise; taking the audience unawares, as did Paul at Athens by his quick, adroit reference to the altar to agnosticism—the shrine of the unknown—on which he immediately inscribed the name of the true God. An old Scotch preacher read for his text one day, “I can do all things.” Stepping a little away from the pulpit, he said, “Paul, I’ll bet a penny you are mistaken.” That sentence secured the attention of his audience, when he proceeded to read the remainder of the text, “through Christ who strengtheneth me,” and then said, “Paul, had ye bet, I should have lost.” This, like humor, is not sensationalism, not even akin to it in the remotest sense, and the man who can turn the sharp corners, do the unexpected thing, say the unlooked-for word, awaken interest by surprising us when he speaks, is the man whom the King delighteth to honor. How often throughout the public discourses of Jesus, it is stated that the people were astonished at his doctrine. They were surprised at the turns he made, at the method he employed, and certainly it is well for

his ambassadors to follow his example. It would be a surprise to some congregations did their pastors preach the gospel; to others if theirs should preach a new sermon, or discuss a living issue. This, my brethren, is not sensational preaching, it is playing upon a few of the many thousand chords which vibrate in that wonderful harp we call life.

And let me emphasize tremendously, if I am able, the fact that preaching calls for an expression of mental and soul force up to the limit of the preacher's capability. The tone of his voice, the emphasis he puts upon his words, the flash of his eye, and the movement of his body, all tell upon the life of those who hear. If a man should make love in an ordinary tone and indifferent spirit, his sweetheart would laugh him to scorn. Should a man cry Fire, or Murder, in an ordinary tone of voice, nobody would respond to his cry. Should a mad dog be loose in the highway, who would not cry out, who would not shout, and scream, and yell? Turn a lion, or a viper loose in the community and hear the uproar, and yet when it comes to telling of the love of God; to warning men against the fire of an endless hell; of a murderer whose bloody hands have reeked through all the centuries; of a poison more subtle, more sure

than that of the mad dog, or serpent; of a power that crushes, ruins, and devours more dreadfully than does the lion, the watchman upon the wall must be genteel, very polite, sweet-toned, and modest-mannered. It would be sensationalism to cut up antics, to play the clown, to cut gymnastics while crying fire or murder, but it would be mighty good, common sense to put some vim in the movement, some strain into the voice, and some intensity into the cry. Mawkish, clownish antics when dealing with sin and salvation, are sensational, but earnestness, intensity, and fervor, or expressions of interest, are forces that win.

THE PREACHING THAT WINS

Not the preaching that draws. Were a preacher to stand on his head when he pronounced the benediction, that would draw, but it would not win. Were he to wear one trousers leg made of blue and the other of red, that would draw, but it wouldn't win. Were he to dance a jig in the pulpit, or kiss the prettiest old maid in the audience, that would draw, but it wouldn't win. It would be sensational enough for even modern life, but it would lack the power to win men from sin to God.

It is as true now as ever in the history of the world that souls are hungering for the bread of

life. The Greeks are still saying, "*Sirs, we would see Jesus,*" and penitent men are still saying, "*What must we do to be saved?*" and the preacher mistakes his calling, tramples upon his commission, and violates his most sacred obligation, when he fails to present Jesus Christ and point the way to Him. All too often stones are given for bread, and scorpions palmed off for eggs. Preachers of Paul's stamp scorn the preaching that shuts the Bible as if it were of no use, and then emphasize philosophy, systems of ethics, popular literature, signs of the times, the social and political problems of the age, or the needs of modern civilization, while Jesus knocks for admittance and the Holy Spirit pleads for the life. No, my brethren, it is not *sensational* preaching the world needs, it is *sensible* preaching.

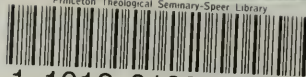
There is room, I grant, in the pulpit for reference to the events of the day, but it should be subordinate to the great theme of the gospel. Many preachers act upon the assumption that discussions on public questions excite more interest and draw larger crowds than the old truths of the gospel. "Swat the Fly," "Gather Up Sticks and Stones From the Highway," become sweet subjects to some preachers, while the call to repentance, and the announcement of His resurrection

are forgotten. Why is it so? For the simple reason that such preachers are more at home with current events than they are with the truths of the Bible. They read the newspapers more than they do the law of heaven and earth. The preacher who knows more of the fringe and the frame of the Bible than he does about its living truth and its burning heart, who attracts the crowd by the discussion of sensational themes, and the passing questions of the day, is destined at no distant period to lose his place in the realm of moral teaching. When the gospel is vitally preached, the people are as much interested as they ever were. It is the freshest and most attractive theme men have ever handled. The preacher who is filled with the Holy Spirit of God, and has his gospel interpreted to him from above, tells the old story of the Cross and the resurrection of the Christ with irresistible power and charm. What the people really turn from are sermons on religion by men who do not understand religion. The half converted, unconsecrated, intellectual preacher with a smattering of higher criticism, and a desire for social heroism, undertaking to interpret infinite love and its call to repentance, makes but a sorry out of it at best. A weary, tired heart went not long ago to hear a

returned missionary, saying over and over, he can tell me where to find comfort. The returned missionary talked about the good that children could do by picking up the sticks off the public highway, and of the many little ministries within their reach, and the poor tired soul that had gone to the sanctuary to see Jesus, never had as much as a glimpse of Him.

Depend upon it that when the gospel is sincerely and vitally preached, it is to-day, as it ever has been, and forever will be, the world's greatest need, and preacher's greatest theme.

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